Gov't wants peace with Reds in 18 months

STORY ON PAGE A2

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Employers, workers oppose SSS increase

BY JOWEL F. CANUDAY
ARMAND N. NOCUM AND RAUL C. DANCEL

EMPLOYERS and workers alike are opposing the plan of the Social Security System (SSS) to raise the monthly contributions paid by its 23 million members.

The growing opposition has prompted

EMPLOYERS/ A17

A GATHERING of suspects in the Dacer double murders at the PNP headquarters in Camp Crame. From left, P/Insp. Bobby Lancaoan, SPO4 Mariano Soberano, SPO3 Jose Escalante, SPO1 Mauro Torres, civilians Renato Malabanan, Jovencio Malabanan, Crisostomo Purificacion and Rommel Rollan.

Lacson to be summoned

To be asked to explain involvement of his men in Dacer killings

BY CHRISTINE HERRERA,
CATHY C. YAMSUAN AND JULIET L. JAVELLANA

"ONE thing is sure . . . there is a grand conspiracy here," Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said yesterday of the double murder of Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and driver Manuel Corbito, as he revealed that the crime had "two or three masterminds."

Perez said authorities already know who the masterminds are, but are not ready to reveal their identities.

Police authorities will summon former PNP and Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force chief Panfilo "Ping" Lacson Jr. and two of his top aides to explain suspects' claims that they were simply following orders when they abducted and killed Dacer and Corbito.

PNP chief Director General Leandro Mendoza disclosed this yesterday, saying that authorities also planned to question Lacson aides Senior Superintendents Michael Ray Aquino and Cesar Mancao.

Lacson, an opposition senatorial candidate, was invited by the Senate human rights committee to testify at a public hearing today on the Dacer case, in his capacity as former PAOCTF head.

Lacson said he would attend the inquiry "to expunge all malicous and baseless insinuations that I have something to do with the Dacer case."

LACSON/ A17

They never pleaded for their lives –witness

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC
AND CHRISTINE HERRERA

SALVADOR "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Manuel Corbito were brave and calm in the face of death, a witness to the murders revealed yesterday as he recounted the terrible events of Nov. 24.

"The tape was a little bit loose on their mouths to allow them to speak. But they did not utter any word" and never pleaded for their lives, said Cavite resident William Lopez, 38.

"*Matigas din . . . matapang* (They were brave)," he told reporters at the National Bureau of Investigation.

THEY/ A17

SYMPATHIZERS of deposed President Estrada march to the Sandiganbayan to protest his arrest warrant, the first ever to be issued to a Philippine president.

BULLIT MARQUEZ/AP

Erap asks for 2 gifts on his 64th birthday

BY VOLT CONTRERAS

EXPECT that trademark photo-op of Joseph Estrada eating with his bare hands with the folks in at least four deprived communities in Metro Manila.

It has been his traditional way of celebrating his birthday for the past 16 years. And, despite his ongoing battle to stay out of prison, Estrada continues his custom today, his 64th birthday.

There are only two things he wants on his birthday. First is an end to his "persecution" through "fabricated charges," according to a statement released by the Puwersa ng Masa-Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino coalition.

Second is a gift from the teeming poor who elected him to the presidency with the largest ever majority in a free election: that they vote straight Puwersa-LDP in the May 14 election.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has sent him an advance birthday wish: that he may find peace in his heart.

"How can I have peace in my heart on my birthday with what they're doing to me?"

ERAP/ A18

I knew Bubby when he was Badong, the pauper, a real 'oragon'

BY MARCIAL R. PIMENTEL
Former congressman and governor, Camarines Norte

I KNEW Badong Dacer as a teenage pauper and 60-year-old multimillionaire.

Once upon a time, when I was the incumbent mayor of the capital town of Daet, a group of newsmen from Naga Times came to visit my office.

With the group was Salvador "Badong" Dacer, then 19. He was intelligent and evidently Eurasian. He elicited special attention from me because he was crudely dressed, malnourished and had the aura of a discouraged young man.

Badong kept himself withdrawn from the rest. He sat a meter behind Bong Palmiano, the 40-year-old big boss of the group. Bong would blurt out an order and Badong would go running to Palmiano's jeep to get some papers.

My guests said they came over

I KNEW/ A17

Desierto seeks Erap's early arrest

Ex-president's lawyers to sue Ani, want him impeached

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC
AND VOLT CONTRERAS

OMBUDSMAN Aniano Desierto will file today an amended complaint for plunder against Joseph Estrada to force the Sandiganbayan to immediately issue a warrant for his arrest.

Desierto yesterday told the INQUIRER that senior Ombudsman officials had consented to the filing of the amended complaint so that the Sandigan's third division, which is handling the plunder case, would have no reason to delay the issuance of the arrest warrant.

"It is in the discretion of the Office of the Ombudsman to file an amended complaint to strengthen the case and also to speed up the proceedings," he said.

But Estrada's legal team plans to wage a separate war against Desierto, who, it said, was kowtowing to political interests to "humiliate" the ex-president by first suing him for multiple crimes, forcing him to post bail and pose for mug shots, and then withdrawing most of the charges afterward.

Lawyer Raymond Fortun told the INQUIRER they would "definitely file a civil action against Desierto for tarnishing Mr. Estrada's reputation."

The civil action, which will demand a still undetermined amount for damages, will most likely be filed next week with the Manila Regional Trial Court, he said.

In a press conference, Estrada spokesperson Jesus Crispin "Boying" Remulla said they were also considering "going to Congress to seek the impeachment" of Desierto.

DESIERTO/ A18

THE FINAL Christmas for Ed Abad was as peaceful and joyful as the season, and full of the love of (from left) wife Nanette and children Jonathan Edmon, 9, and Ena Francesca, 7.

Thanks, Ed; Inquirer family will miss you

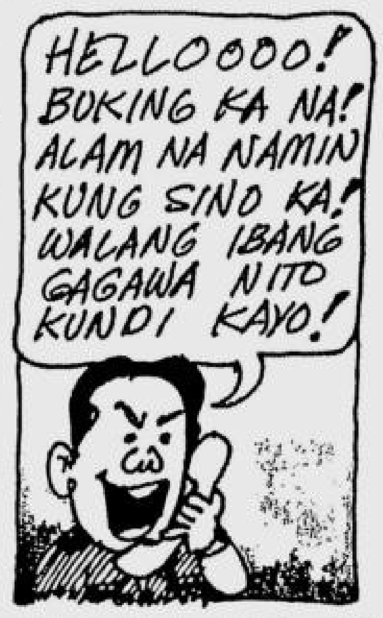
BY JERRY ESPLANADA

THE INFORMATION technology department of the INQUIRER has lost its "trigger man" to a killer disease.

Eduardo M. Abad, head of this paper's editorial systems support section, succumbed three days ago to pancreatic cancer, seven months after his ailment was diagnosed.

Only 39, the man whom his wife Ramona "Nanette" Arban-Abad described as a "perfect husband and very loving and caring father" died in her arms at around 2:50 a.m.

THANKS/ A18



HELLOOOO! BUKING KA NA! ALAM NA NAMIN KUNG SINO KA! WALANG IBANG GAGAWA NITO KUNDI KAYO!

Cops sweep Sandigan for bugs

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

HELLO, is anyone out there eavesdropping?

Electronics specialists yesterday swept of wiretapping devices all landline and cellular phones being used at the Sandiganbayan. This as members of the anti-graft court prepared for the coming trial of ousted President Joseph Estrada and his associates.

COPS/ A18

Second FRONT PAGE

PANG-MATAGALANG
KAPAYAPAAN
NA SANA ITO!

TIMETABLE FOR TALKS WITH REDS

Gov't wants peace in 18 months

BY CARLITO PABLO

PEACE with the communists in 18 months?

Silvestre Bello III, chair of the government peace panel that will resume negotiations with Filipino communist leaders in Oslo, Norway, on April 27, thinks it's possible.

Bello proposed to the rebel National Democratic Front that they complete their peace talks in 18 months, or before the year 2002 ends.

Bello made his proposal during the Solidarity for a Just and Lasting Peace conference held yesterday at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel and sponsored by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines.

Present at the forum were National Security Adviser Roilo Golez, Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor, Agrarian Secretary Hernani Braganza, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, former President Fidel Ramos, former speaker Jose de Venecia, former chief government negotiator Howard Dee and even superstar Nora Aunor, who is running for governor of Camarines Sur.

Also in attendance were representatives from the embassies of France, Australia, the Netherlands, Malaysia, Sweden and Cuba.

Gloria no-show

Conspicuous by her absence, however, was President Macapagal-Arroyo who, according to her chief of staff and spokesperson Renato Corona, saw "no reason" to attend the event that brought together members of both the government and the NDF peace panels.

Corona said the President felt she did not need to attend the conference, "after all the leader of the other side didn't attend the forum either."

Corona said the President had been invited to the event by its organizers but "she was not the guest speaker, it was just a courtesy invitation."

Some militants questioned Ms Macapagal's absence after she had been billed as the guest of honor.

"The President missed a great opportunity to present her government's concerns and policies on how to end the 32-year-old armed conflict," the militant group Bayan said in a statement.

Government officials and conference organizers reportedly tried to do some damage control by asking Bayan to withhold further comment on the absence of the President.

The Bayan statement said the President found it more worthwhile to meet with convicted priest killer Norberto Manero and engaged movie stars Aga Muhlach and Charlene Gonzales than to attend the conference on the peace talks.

Bello's speech

In his speech, Bello said, "We believe there is no difficulty we cannot overcome, and no obstacle too great, as long as we both recognize that the welfare of our people must always be our primary consideration."

NDF chief peace negotiator Luis Jalandoni said his group "will try its best to achieve an agreement."

"Both panels will work as hard as possible within the time frame suggested by the government," Jalandoni said, although he noted that the deadline should not be too rigid.

Bello pointed out that three of four substantive issues remain for negotiation following the signing in 1998 of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

These issues involve social and economic reforms, political and constitutional reforms, and the cessation of hostilities and the disposition of forces.

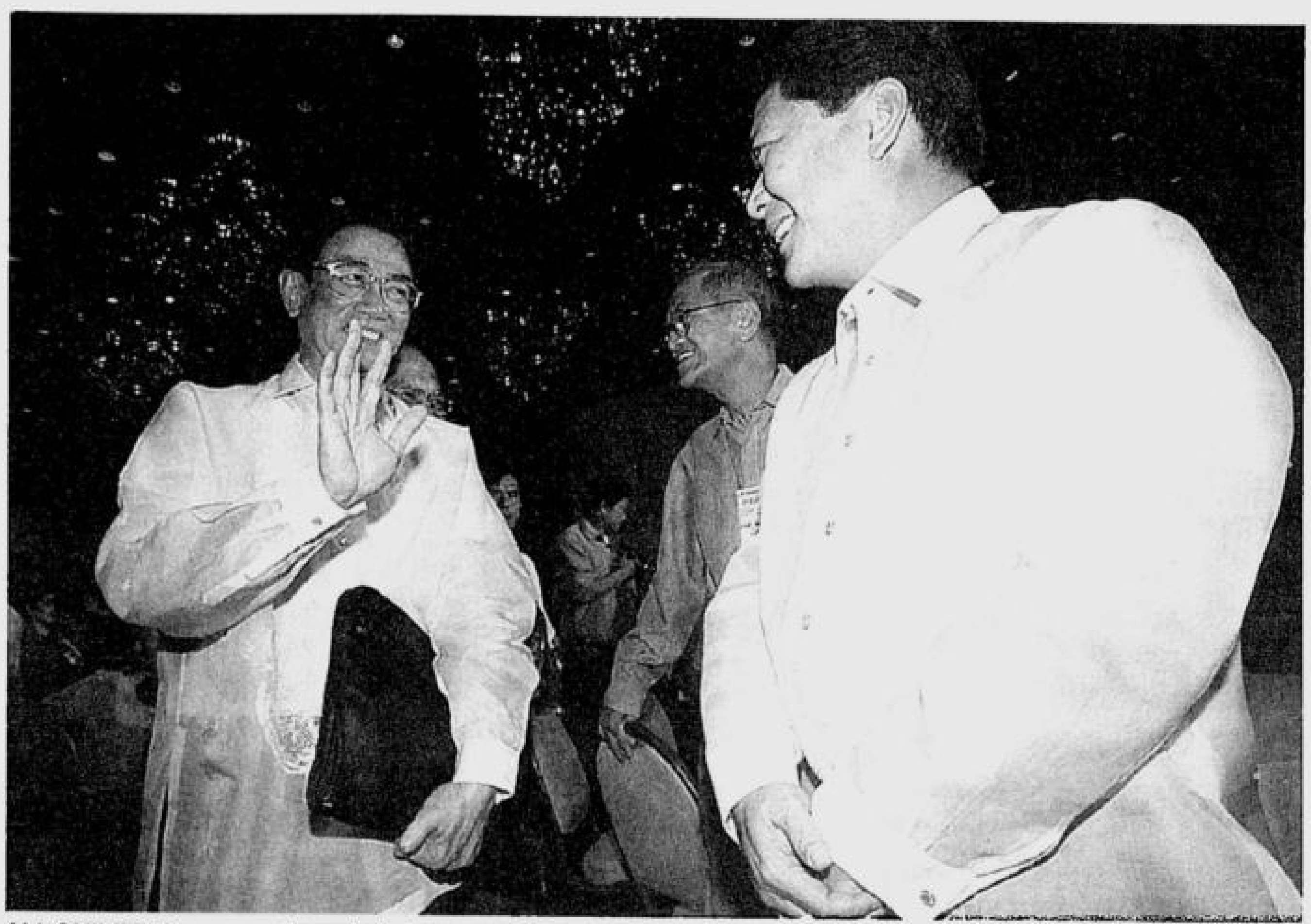
He said the peace panels could devote a total of six months to each issue, thereby completing the talks in 18 months.

In his speech, Jalandoni invited the government and others involved in the peace process to study the NDF program because "it is our conviction that the national democratic line is the line for a just and lasting peace."

NDF senior adviser Antonio Zumel failed to attend the conference since he is recovering from a mild stroke.

In his speech read for him by lawyer Romeo Capulong, Zumel urged President Macapagal to "be bold enough to depart from the policies pursued by her predecessors which brought disaster upon the toiling masses of our people."

These policies, according to Zumel, include the country's participation in economic globalization and "other imperialist impositions." *With Donna S. Cueto*



ALL SMILES: Peace negotiators Luis Jalandoni of the National Democratic Front and Ambassador Howard Dee and Silvestre Bello III of the government exchange pleasantries during yesterday's peace conference. ERIK ARAZAS

Mass pardon, but not for Rowe killers

BY DONNA S. CUETO

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has granted pardons to and commuted the sentences of 387 prisoners nationwide on the recommendation of the Board of Pardons and Parole this week.

The President signed the memorandum which granted an absolute pardon to only one prisoner, Teodoro Sinaca Jr., and conditional pardons with parole conditions to 25 others.

She commuted the sentences of 361 other prisoners.

Presidential chief of staff and spokesperson Renato Corona said he did not know if the prisoners included the estimated 200 political detainees whose release had been demanded by the communist National Democratic Front ahead of the holding of peace talks with the government.

One thing was sure, Corona said, the President did not sign an order allowing for the release of Danilo Continente and Juanito Itaas, who were convicted for the murder of US military adviser Col. James Rowe in Quezon City in 1989.

The NDF had demanded the release of the two along with about 200 other political prisoners before the start of peace talks on April 27 in Oslo, Norway.

Earlier, the President ordered the release of 42 political prisoners as a gesture of "goodwill" to the rebels and to entice them to come to the peace table.

Palace defends Berroya appointment

BY A. N. NOCUM

MALACANANG yesterday defended the designation of Senior Supt. Reynaldo Berroya as intelligence chief of the Philippine National Police, saying he had been cleared of kidnapping charges by the Supreme Court no less.

In a press briefing, Presidential chief of staff and spokesperson Renato Corona also denied it was President Macapagal-Arroyo who had recommended that Berroya head the PNP-Intelligence Group (PNP-IG).

Berroya was imprisoned at the national penitentiary after he was implicated in the kidnapping of Chinese businessman Jack Chou in 1993 by former PNP chief Panfilo Lacson who was serving in the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission under then vice president Joseph Estrada at the time.

While a local court found Berroya guilty of the crime and sentenced him to life in prison, the Supreme Court reversed his conviction and ordered him freed in 1997.

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Task force relegated to PNP museum

By Dave M. Veridiano

THE SUN was fierce and temperatures were soaring yesterday but for the remaining original members of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force it was a day of doom and gloom.

A day after President Macapagal-Arroyo signed the executive order abolishing the controversial PAOCTF, its chief, Deputy Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, led his men in dismantling the emblems and logos of the once powerful special unit at its Camp Crame compound.

The motley group of PAOCTF members brought down the task force flag, took down its brass official seal and a large plastic neon sign at the gate.

Thus signaled the formal end of the much-hated and much-envied unit that gained notoriety under the leadership of Panfilo Lacson, later PNP chief, who is now an opposition senatorial candidate.

All the PAOCTF paraphernalia were turned over to the Philippine National Police Museum.

"The good things done by the PAOCTF will always be remembered, especially by the beneficiaries. The evil things, however, will not easily go away. They will continue to haunt some people, especially the victims of its inhumanity," PNP Chief Leandro Mendoza said in a brief speech before some PNP officers and men.

Ebdane described the task force abolition as a wake-up call for unity and reform.

Arroyo signed on Tuesday Executive Order No. 10 abolishing the PAOCTF and transferring its functions and resources to the office of the PNP Deputy Chief for Administration, headed by Ebdane.

Best for PPC is 10-3, says survey

By Christine Avendaño

DECLARING the results to be the most "optimistic prediction" for the pro-administration People Power Coalition, a survey firm commissioned by the PPC has the coalition winning 10-3 in the May 14 senatorial race.

The results were based on two surveys made for the PPC by the Social Pulse Inc. from March 18 to 22 and April 6 to 8 (not April 5 to 9 as earlier reported).

While the national rankings showed a 9-4 vote in favor of the PPC in the two SPI surveys, SPI director for research Carmen Charvet said the differences in ranking of the senatorial candidates for both PPC and non-PPC were "statistically not significant."

Charvet explained that the movements in the rankings were very close, particularly for those placed in the 11th to 15th slots.

The two surveys showed that the 11th and 12th slots were occupied by the opposition Puwersa ng Masa bets Ricardo Puno and Orlando Mercado, while the 13th slot was taken by another PPC bet, Bohol Rep. Ernesto Herrera.

The 14th spot was initially occupied by the Puwersa ng Masa's Panfilo Lacson but was swiftly snatched away by PPC bet Winnie Monsod in the next survey.

Monsod achieved the biggest jump of the candidates in the latest survey, from 17th to 14th.

The 15th spot was initially occupied by PnM bet Sen. Miriam Santiago, only to be taken by Lacson in the next survey.

"Based on the margin of error (of 2.8 percent), Monsod is likely to be the one to get in (the magic 13)," Charvet said, explaining the "optimistic prediction" of 10-3 in favor of the PPC slate.

The survey covered 2,100 respondents from 29 provinces, 28 cities and 19 municipalities.

Charvet went to the INQUIRER office yesterday to explain that the survey had a "sampling error" of plus or minus 2.8 percent and a confidence level of 95 percent.

The INQUIRER had earlier erroneously reported that the survey had a margin of error of 13 percent.

The survey firm's mailing address is Unit 4, 7670 JB Roxas St., Makati City.

Charvet also stressed that the SPI was an independent entity which had been commissioned by the PPC to conduct a national survey of senatorial candidates.

The survey did not show the PPC posting a 13-0 victory in any of the regions, Charvet said.

But it did manage a 12-1 victory in the National Capital Region. Only PPC bet Liwayway Vinzons-Chato did not make it to the "magic 13" winning circle, as she ranked 17th. Independent candidate Noli de Castro was the only non-PPC bet who made it in the NCR, ranking 3rd. *With a report from Volt Contreras*

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MEGADIKE SCAM POSTCRIPT

Exec facing graft raps named asec

By Armand N. Nocum

A FORMER public works official who was linked to the 1996 P2.7-billion lahar megadike scandal and claims to be close to President Macapagal-Arroyo has been appointed assistant secretary in the Department of Public Works and Highways.

The appointment of Florante Soriquez, a former director of the Mt. Pinatubo Rehabilitation Project Management Office with graft cases pending before the Sandiganbayan, has raised concern among Palace officials.

A large portion of the FVR Megadike, located in San Fernando, Pampanga, collapsed during a lahar onslaught on Aug. 5, 1996.

Soriquez, who was relieved of his post at the public works department, was charged with 11 others—including former public works secretary Gregorio Vigilar—with administrative and criminal offenses before the Office of the Ombudsman and the Sandiganbayan anti-graft court for the dike's allegedly faulty design and substandard construction.

Soriquez was appointed assistant secretary on March 22 and took his oath six days later.

In a telephone interview, Soriquez admitted to having cases against him pending in the Sandiganbayan but was confident that they would soon be dismissed.

"I can have them dismissed. They are dismissable," Soriquez said.

He claimed to have been a mere "fall guy" in the megadike issue.

He said the President was aware of the charges and would not have appointed him if she believed him to be guilty.

His closeness to Ms Macapagal dated back to her stint in the Senate, he said.

"I was giving her data to defend the budget of the Pinatubo projects. I always accompanied her to budget hearings," Soriquez said, adding that they remain close to this day.

"Everybody at the DPWH knows that I'm close to the President," he said.

Told about the concerns raised by Palace officials, Presidential Management Staff head Vicky Garchitorena said she would go over the records of Soriquez. She said she was not aware of the criminal charges against him.

4 bodies found in riverside

By Ben M. Ebreo
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Four decomposing bodies were dug up by police from a shallow riverside grave in Barangay Don Mariano Marcos here yesterday morning.

The bodies—belonging to three women, one of them pregnant, and a boy—were discovered along the Magat River after local residents espied a pair of slippers protruding from the riverbank.

Police said the victims' hands and feet had been bound with aluminum wire. Their heads were covered with plastic while their bodies were wrapped in bed sheets.

Police have yet to identify the victims.

Ben Mannag, 60, a local resident, said his children were bathing in the river when they saw a pair of slippers sticking out of the ground.

"When they tried to pull them out, they were shocked to see a pair of feet," he said in Ilocano.

An unidentified source from the provincial police office said the four victims might have been wealthy individuals.

"The bed sheets used to wrap the bodies appeared to be very expensive. They seem to have been wealthy," the source said.

He said the victims appeared to have been killed at least two days before their bodies were found in the riverbank.

He said the head of one of the female victims appeared to have been bashed in with a hard object.

"We will not discount any possibilities, but the manner it was carried out points to amateur perpetrators," he said.

Mannag said some residents saw a green van going to the river on the night of April 14. The van left the following day, he said, but none of the villagers jotted down its plate number.

The discovery of the bodies comes more than four months after residents of Bagabag town found three headless male corpses near a bridge in their municipality.

Two of the bodies were initially thought to be those of missing publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Manuel Corbito.

In Quezon City the other day, three headless male bodies were found on Mindanao Avenue. Police believe the victims, who were all very young, were killed in a case of mistaken identity. Their heads have yet to be found.

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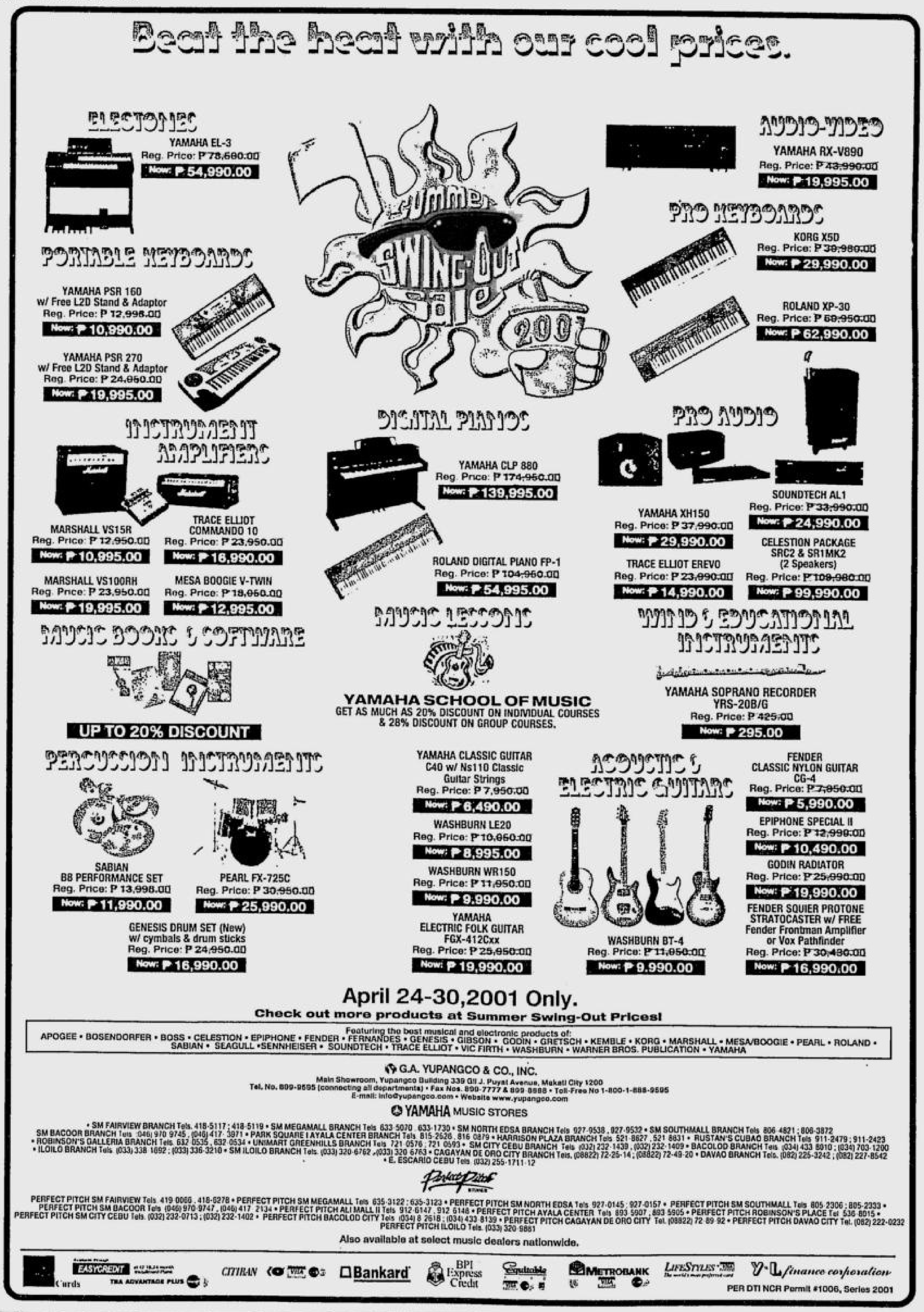
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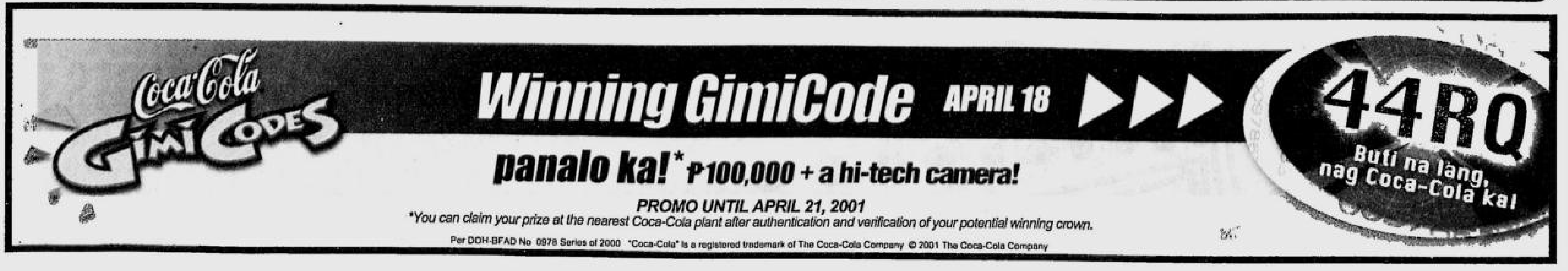
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AMVEL
LAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

SO THE PUBLIC MAY KNOW

We wish to clarify issues raised in the media based on a complaint filed with the Ombudsman by a certain Atty. Ernesto B. Francisco for plunder against former President Estrada, Bro. Mike Velarde, Gregorio Vigilar and others that are false, misleading and inaccurate.

Allows us to present the facts to correct whatever misconceptions and unfavorable impression the complaint may have created against the company and its owners.

ALLEGATION I: *That the company* ***offered and connived*** *to sell the property to the Philippine Government.*

This is not true.

The truth is that the property at issue was part of the Amvel Business Park, which had been conceptualized and planned by the Amvel Land Development Corporation (formerly ADV Realty) since 1996.

As early as 1997 during the Ramos administration, the company was notified by the Toll Regulatory Board that our property will be affected by the C-5 toll way project. Amvel had already finalized the master plan and development was underway when the notice of expropriation was received. Amvel initially opposed this because it would adversely affect its project. It took one year of negotiation before Amvel agreed to the final alignment of the C-5. **Again, Amvel did not offer the property for sale. It was forcibly acquired by the government.**

ALLEGATION II: *That the properties which are classified as agricultural land were* ***outrageously overpriced.*** *Furthermore, Amvel acquired the properties at P2,000 per sq. m.*

These statements are bereft of any factual basis.

Firstly, the properties within the Amvel development are zoned and classified as commercial areas, not agricultural.

Secondly, the original appraisal done by the MMDA and the City Assessor's Office of Paranaque was at P20,000 to 25,000 per sq. m. Properties adjacent to that of Amvel development were purchased using that range of appraised values. At the time of the forcible sale, the average zonal valuation of commercial properties in the area ranged from P25,000 to P30,000 per sq. m.

While other land owners of the adjacent properties likewise affected by the C-5 project were paid prices ranging from P20,000 to 25,000 per sq. m., Amvel was subjected to several independent appraisals by professional appraisers as directed by the Toll Regulatory Board. The appraisals resulted in a valuation of P15,355 per sq. m. or about P10,000 less than the original appraisal. The said amount of P15,355 was imposed by the TRB upon Amvel to which the latter acceded.

Lastly, some of the properties comprising the Amvel development were acquired by Amvel as undeveloped raw land at a purchase price of not less than P7,500 per sq. m., not at P2,000 per sq.m. as alleged. The price does not even include incidental expenses for the acquisition and consolidation of the properties.

After the purchase of these properties, development works were immediately started by Amvel pursuant to Amvel Business Park's development plan. Due to these development inputs the value of these properties was greatly enhanced.

Hence, **the acquisition cost of the properties subject to the expropriation was not overpriced.**

ALLEGATION III: *That with the intervention of President Estrada, the deal was* ***immediately approved*** *and that the money was released in just two and half days after the approval of the President.*

This is a blatant lie.

The truth of the matter is that during the first quarter of 1998, agencies concerned finally determined and decided the alignment of the C-5. Thus, the area of our development to be expropriated and the appraised value of said area were finalized by the agencies concerned. Accordingly, payment of the affected areas was approved at that time as shown by TRB Resolution No.98-22.

There is nothing irregular about this as public documents will show that properties adjacent to our property and likewise subjected to the expropriation for the C-5 project were already acquired and paid for by the Government at a much higher price.

Despite previous compliance of the requirements and conditions imposed by TRB, the payment to Amvel was deferred when the new administration of President Estrada took over. Under the new administration, the properties were subjected to appraisal again, this time by independent appraisers.

It was only on January 15,1999, that the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) again issued another resolution (Resolution No.99-02) approving the acquisition of the Amvel property. On March 30, 1999, the Office of the President-PMS reviewed and approved the TRB resolution. On April 5, 1999, the TRB issued a certification compliance implementing the Memorandum Order of the President. Payment was then only made on April 22, 1999, three months after the board approval of the expropriation and acquisition cost of Amvel's affected properties — **almost two and a half years since the start of the negotiations, not two and a half days as alleged.**

In addition to the foregoing, the company would like to inform the public that it is a privately held corporation owned by the family of Mariano Z. Velarde. The company is distinct and independent from the El Shaddai Foundation or any of the latter's ministries.

This issue has been raised several times in the past. Therefore, Amvel welcomes this complaint filed by Atty. Francisco as it gives the company the proper forum to finally answer all these allegations.

However, the company reserves the right to file the appropriate legal action for damages to the integrity and reputation of the company and its owners that may result from this baseless and malicious complaint.

Finally, Amvel in issuing this clarification, hopes that all these issues will be laid to rest to allow us to continue our development of the Amvel Business Park as a premier logistics center and business park. Amvel is determined to pursue and realize its development project as Amvel feels that the proximity of the project to the NAIA will be attractive to investors and locators, thereby helping in its own little way to the progress of the nation.

FOUR-YEAR RETAIL TREASURY BONDS

Offering Period
April 20 - 26

Issue Date
May 4, 2001

Minimum Investment
P5,000.00

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Republic of the Philippines

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BPI Capital Corporation
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DBP
Developmeny Bank of the Philippines
Tel. No. 893-3511 / 818-9511
loc. 2436; 2415; 2403

PARTICIPATING UNDERWRITER

PCI Capital Corporation
Tel. No. 840-7000

APPLICATION TO PURCHASE

Application to purchase must be for a minimum amount of PhP5,000.00, and in multiples thereof, not to exceed PhP2,000,000.00 per applicant in the public offering only. This application must be received not later than 12:00 noon Manila time on April 26, 2001 (the "Offer Period Closing Date") by any of the relevant Underwriters for the Offer unless extended or terminated earlier at such time and date as the Department of Finance (DOF)/Bureau of the Treasury (BTR) may determine. Applications and payments received thereafter will be rejected.

This Application is irrevocable and, once submitted, may not be withdrawn by the applicant. The Department of Finance/Bureau of the Treasury reserves the right to accept or reject this Application. Application improperly or incompletely accomplished may likewise be rejected. In case of oversubscription, the DOF/BTR reserves the right to allocate the RTBs available to the applicants in a manner it deems appropriate.

I/We (the "Applicant") hereby apply to purchase Retail Treasury Bonds of the Bureau of Treasury subject to the Terms and Conditions of the Bonds made available to any applicant at the principal office of the relevant Underwriter.

TOTAL PURCHASE PRICE* (in words)(*must be a multiple of PhP5,00.00)	PhP

WARRANTY/PAYMENT INSTRUCTION

I/We represent and warrant that I/we have the legal capacity and/or authority to enter into this purchase transaction, and that all information provided herein are true and correct. Having read, understood, and relied upon the provisions of the Terms and Conditions of the 4-year RTBs, I/we unconditionally and irrevocably accept said Terms and Conditions. I/We understand that no person has been authorized to give information or to make any presentation with respect to the offer of the 4-year RTBs other than those specified in the Terms and Conditions of the 4-year RTBs. I/We also authorize that all proceeds due from the Bonds, such as coupon and maturity payments, be credited to the bank account number indicated hereunder.

APPLICANT'S FULL NAME (in print)	
APPLICANT'S MAILING ADDRESS	DATE
APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE	ROSS ACCT. NO. (if applicable)
TELEPHONE NUMBER	BANK ACCOUNT NUMBER
ID NUMBER (TIN/SSS/GSIS/PASSPORT, etc.)	NATIONALITY

N.B.: This form should be machine validated by teller to confirm transaction.

CONFIRMATION OF SALE

(to be completed by the Underwriter/Selling Agent)

4-year Retail Treasury Bonds

The Underwriter hereby CONFIRMS that it has SOLD, TRANSFERRED AND CONVEYED unto the above-named Applicant, all of its rights, titles and interests over the following described 4-Year Treasury Retail Bonds, held by the Bureau of the Treasury under the Registry of Scripless Securities (ROSS) system.

FACE AMOUNT	ISSUE DATE	COUPON RATE	MATURITY DATE
PhP	MAY 4, 20001	14.25% P.A.	MAY 4, 2005

Application Received by (Name of Underwriter/Selling Agents)	Authorized Signature	Date

OPENING OF DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

Applicants for the 4-year RTBs who do not have an existing deposit account shall be required to open such an account with the Underwriter. This account shall be used to credit periodic coupon and maturity payments under the Bonds. Said account may not be closed by the applicant until the maturity of the Bond, unless the Bond is sold, exchanged, or cashed-out in full prior to maturity.

If the applicant is an individual, the following documents must be submitted.

1) a photocopy of any one of the following: Passport / Driver's License / Postal ID / Company ID; or
2) a photocopy of any one of the following: SSS ID / GSIS ID / Senor Citizen's ID.

If the applicant is a Corporation, Partnership, Trust, Association, or Institution, the following documents must be submitted:

1) a certified true copy of its Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, or other constitutive document;
2) a certified true copy of its SEC Certificate of Registration; and
3) a notarized certification of the Resolution of the Board of Directors and/or other appropriate committee or body authorizing the purchase of the 4-year RTBs and designating the authorized signatories thereof.

For tax-exempt Corporate or Institutional Applicants, a certified true copy of the Tax Exemption Certificate issued by the Bureau of Internal Revenue must likewise be attached to this Application.

CERTAIN RELEVANT INFORMATION CONCERNING THE ISSUE OF THE 4-YEAR RTBs

Unless otherwise expressly stated or the context provides otherwise, all terms used herein shall have the meanings ascribed to them in the Terms and Condition of the Bonds.

THE 4-YEAR RTBs. The Republic of the Philippines is offering a minimum of Five Billion (PhP5,000,000,000.00) worth of 4-year RTBs with maturity of four years.

The 4-year RTBs shall constitute direct, unconditional, and general obligations of the Issuer and shall at all times rank *pari passu* and without any preference or priority among such obligations. The bonds shall be scripless and registered under the BTR's ROSS System.

THE PRIMARY ISSUE. The primary issue consists of an Institutional Offering and a Public Offering. In both the Institutional and Public Offerings, investors may subscribe through the Underwriters by submitting the duly accomplished Application to Purchase. The Underwriter hereby confirms that it will provide liquidity by granting at all times two-way prices for the Bonds to investors that have purchased the Bonds from it.

INSTITUTIONAL OFFERING. The Institutional Offering shall be conducted through a Bookbuilding Process at the end of which (on April 18, 2001) the coupon rate for the 4-year RTBs was set. During the Bookbuilding Process, applications to purchase must be for a minimum Face Value of One Million Pesos (PhP1,000,000.00).

PUBLIC OFFERING. The Public Offering Period shall commence on April 20, 2001 and shall end at 12:00 noon of April 26, 2001. The Issuer reserves the right to extend or terminate the Public Offering period at any time.

ELIGIBLE INVESTORS. Any qualified individual, corporation, partnership, trust, association, or institution may subscribe to the 4-year RTBs, subject to the applicant's compliance with the requirements of the Issuer.

MINIMUM SUBSCRIPTION. Under the Public Offering, applications to purchase the 4-year RTBs must be for a minimum of Face Value of Five Thousand Pesos (PhP5,000.00) but in no case to exceed Two Million Pesos (PhP2,000,000.00) per applicant in the Public Offering.

APPLICATION AND PAYMENT FOR THE 4-YEAR RTBs. Applicants may purchase the 4-year RTBs under the Public Offering by submitting to the Underwriter the duly accomplished Application to Purchase, with payment in full enclosed, not later than April 26, 2001. If, however, payment is not cleared by Issue Date, the Application to Purchase will be deemed cancelled. Applications received thereafter will be rejected. The submission of the applicant to, and receipt by the Underwriter of, the Application to Purchase shall not be deemed as an acceptance by the Issuer of the Application to Purchase the 4-year RTBs. Confirmation from the Bureau of Treasury is required, and such confirmation shall be conveyed by the Underwriter to the Applicant promptly upon receipt thereof.

EVIDENCE OF OWNERSHIP PRIOR TO LISTING. The Applicant's copy of this application form shall evidence the Applicant's ownership of the purchased 4-year RTBs. The Applicant may formally request from the Underwriter a statement regarding his 4-year RTBs inventory.

ISSUE DATE / COUPON PAYMENT DATE. The 4-year RTBs shall be issued on May 4, 2001 and interest shall be payable quarterly on the relevant Coupon Payment dates. The Coupon Payment date shall be automatically adjusted to fall on the immediately succeeding Banking Day, if such Coupon Payment Date is declared or is allowed to be a non-working or non-Banking Day.

TAXES. Any documentary stamp tax applicable to the 4-year RTBs under this Application to Purchase shall be for the account of the Issuer. Any withholding tax due on the interest payable on the 4-year RTBs shall be for the account of the applicant/investor.

THE 4-YEAR RTBs, AND THIS APPLICATION TO PURCHASE, ARE GOVERNED BY AND SUBJECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS THEREOF. THE APPLICANT MAY EXAMINE A COPY OF THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS WHICH SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR EXAMINATION AND PERUSAL BY THE UNDERWRITER/SELLING AGENT AT THE OFFICES OF THE UNDERWRITER/SELLING AGENT DURING NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS.

OPINION

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EUGENIA D. APOSTOL
Founding Chairman

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'Barkadahan'?

EDITORIALS

ARE the May 14 elections a referendum on the ouster of Joseph Estrada? The two political coalitions say it is. But the handful of independent candidates for the Senate say it isn't, or shouldn't be.

In calling for a 13-0 vote in the race for the Senate, the People Power Coalition is sending the unmistakable message that the elections are a continuation of the *jueteng*-based impeachment case that led to Estrada's people-powered ouster. The issue, the 13-0 call assumes, is validation—of the outrage that began to build up during the Senate blue ribbon committee hearings and the Senate trial and culminated in People Power II and drove Estrada out of Malacañang.

The candidates of the opposition Puwersa ng Masa also believe the coming polls are a test of the recent political crisis. Their battle cry, "*Walang iwanan*," appeals to the Filipino's often misplaced sense of loyalty, but at the same time it telegraphs the message that the elections are an us-versus-them contest: those who have stuck with Estrada and the 10 million who voted for him, against those who have used people power to cloak the theft of the seat of power.

According to the independent candidates, however, framing the elections as an Erap-versus-Gloria contest stunts the electorate's growth into political maturity.

The effect is "to make it appear that this is a choice between this *barkada* and that *barkada*," says senatorial candidate Orlando Mercado, Estrada's only defense secretary and Gloria's first. "Is that the way people vote for their senators?"

The coalitions have simplified "the issues in terms of proclaiming to the world that you're either pro-Erap or anti-Erap," says another candidate, former Securities and Exchange Commission Chair Perfecto Yasay. "The former President is not the issue."

To be sure, the label of independence in Philippine politics is like charity; it covers a multitude of sins. Among the eight independent senatorial candidates, for instance, both Mercado and broadcaster Noli de Castro have been "adopted" by the Puwersa ng Masa. Both De Castro and Yasay waited to be drafted by the People Power Coalition. Both Yasay and former House of Representatives secretary general Camilo Sabio are identified with the pro-impeachment camp. And Mercado was a winning member of the 1987 administration team that practically swept the first senatorial elections after martial law.

But they do have a point. A term in the Senate is for six years, twice the length of the term of any local government official. During their tenure, the senators elected in May will have to address other issues of great import. In the next six years, for example, it is likely that the following issues (to name just three) will come to a head: the sparring over the Spratlys with a resurgent China; the ratcheting of globalization under the World Trade Organization; the debate over turning the country into a federal republic.

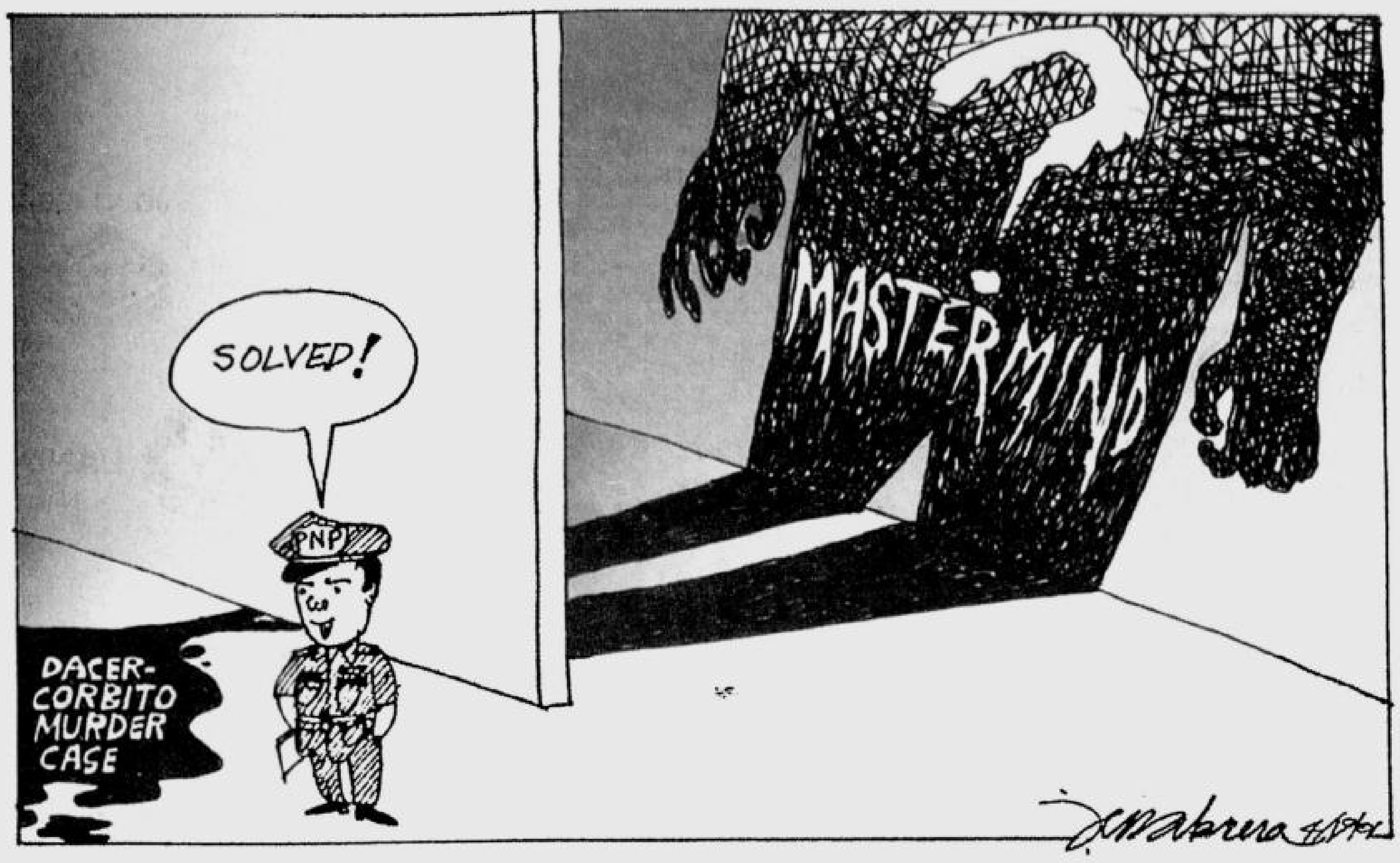
How will the newly elected lawmakers treat these complicated issues, and which way will they vote? The electorate won't know, precisely because this year's campaign is being waged as a proxy war between Erap and Gloria. Sadly, the attempt to use the May 14 elections to either validate the ouster or vindicate the ousted will generate a lot of heat, but not too much light.

'Bidahan'

TODAY, former President Estrada turns 64. For a man who stood on the pinnacle of power only three months ago, the distance between that summit and this abyss (the fingerprinting and posting of bail at the Sandiganbayan Monday) is enormous.

True to form, Estrada will spend part of his day with residents of some of the capital's most blighted areas. They form part of the base that the former movie star claims as his own natural constituency; the get-together is itself part of his traditional rhetoric of images.

If these residents come of their own accord, Estrada can give thanks for one blessing undisguised: Now he knows who his true friends are. Perhaps in the company of these friends, he will be able to welcome the lawsuits as yet another blessing. He has said time and again that he would answer the accusations against him in the proper forum. The senators who voted not to open the second envelope at the impeachment trial effectively denied him that chance. Now, a year older, and hopefully a year wiser, he gets another shot—in court.



Bad timing

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I DO think Erap should be arrested and haled to court for plunder. I was among the first to argue so, writing a column to that effect immediately after People Power II. I said a leader who had robbed his country blind was not sufficiently punished by being ousted from power. He was sufficiently punished by being jailed, something we should have done way back in 1986 to the Marcoses, instead of singing songs about reconciliation and forgiveness. I said we would do well to follow the example of South Korea and try crooks in high office, and where we found them guilty, send them to the pit. That was the only way we could deter corruption: by showing the corrupt could be caught and punished.

But I don't know if we should arrest Erap at this very moment and begin his trial posthaste. I don't know if we shouldn't wait until after the elections to do that.

Of course, arresting him now has its advantages. Theoretically, it could send the message that the elections may not be turned into the last refuge of scoundrels. Theoretically, it could send the message that crimes may not be expunged by popular acclamation. Theoretically, it could send the message that crime and punishment must run their natural course independently of things like elections.

But so, theoretically. These are very powerful lessons—if they can be taught at this point. Unfortunately, these are very edified ideas that fly in the face of not very edified realities. "I'm sorry to say this," a friend of mine told me recently, "but I cannot but feel pity for the man. He looks so *kawawa*."

This friend is by no means part of Erap's loyalist legions. He was one of those who worked tirelessly to oust him, and he was there from Day One protesting his attempt to bury Marcos in the Libingan ng mga Bayani and keeping vigil at Edsa from the first night to the last. Doubtless, some of Erap's appeal for sympathy comes from acting. He knows how to play the part, having done so for most of his life in the movies. But a great deal of it is also real. He looked deathly scared and utterly mortified when he went to the Ombudsman to be fingerprinted—"*para mag-piano*," as the local jargon goes.

If my friend can feel this way, others can feel this way. Here is a case, I think, where we ought to listen a little bit more to the logic of the heart than to the logic of the head. Here is a case where we must find prudence the better part of resoluteness. None of this is to suggest—let us be clear about this again—that we shouldn't arrest and try Erap. All of this is merely to suggest that to do so before the elections would probably do more harm than good.

It would most assuredly impact on the elections—in ways that cannot augur well for the People Power Coalition. Hell hath no fury than Filipinos given a martyr, real or imagined, innocent or guilty. The idea of government not finding it in its heart to wait just a little bit longer before doing what it has to do—"*hindi man lang makahintay*"—would be a kiss of death for its candidates if it should take root in the public mind.

If I recall right, that was exactly what happened in the Flor Contemplacion case. The source of the national fury was not that we thought Contemplacion was innocent—though most of us probably did; the movies that were subsequently made of her life argued so—but that Singapore would not give her one last chance to prove herself innocent. The general perception among Filipinos was that her case was pretty much railroaded by a state that had little respect for due process. And the thought that she would be executed without benefit of one more day in court, or at least one more day in life, was more than the national conscience could bear. With the results we saw then.

The parallels with Erap may not be exact, but the emotional resonances are there. This country's political graveyard is full of people who refused to heed its history, or cultural peculiarities.

But I have one more reason for believing in the wisdom of arresting and trying Erap after the elections, which is based more on principle than pragmatism. That is that doing so should help put his case in better perspective.

There is merit—and power—in Erap's claim that he is being singled out for persecution as a crook. Arguably the most brazen of them all—Joker Arroyo was beside himself trying to find words to describe the ignominy of a president using an alias to hide his loot—he wasn't the only one to have pillaged the treasury. That of course is not an argument for letting him off the hook. That of course is not an argument for not giving immediate attention to his case. But it is a powerful argument for arresting and prosecuting the other crooks in government, including the ones that came before him. Chief of them, Imelda. As far as using aliases go, she too used one—"Jane Saunders"—in her foreign accounts. An apt name, "Saunders" sounds a lot like "launders." And as far as pillage goes, you can't find a bigger pillager than Imelda, with the exception of her husband; they practically invented the word. The picture of Erap bereft of Imelda's company in Muntinlupa raises some pretty serious questions about fairness and universal principles.

While at this, why shouldn't the same principle apply to Cory and Ramos? Erap is right: What about Amari? Or going beyond that, what about Cory and her relatives who took over the sequestered firms or bought them for a song? The prosecution and trial of Erap may not just set a legal precedent for future leaders, it must set a legal reckoning for past ones. Indeed, the trial of Erap may not just be a trial of Erap, it must be a trial of his "triers." It should put on trial as well a president Cory and Ramos helped to put in power. Will she apply the same set of standards to her patrons, or will she reserve that only for Erap? Will she jail all the crooks who passed themselves off as presidents, or will she do that only to one crook who passed himself off as literate?

Those are all-important questions, but ones best left after the elections.

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Note: While Neal Cruz is on vacation, Conrad de Quiros' column will occupy this space on Thursdays and Fridays except when Cruz is able to send his column. —**Ed.**

A spokesperson's desiderata

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

WHEN Bobi Tiglao's name first surfaced a couple of months back as a probable appointee as the President's spokesperson, I asked him whether it was something he'd like to do. He said no. He was busy working on a new IT project for the INQUIRER. There were many things on his mind, and government service wasn't one of them. So the first lesson Bobi had to learn in government service is that it is extraordinarily difficult to say no when a president requests you to serve.

Bobi is a thoroughbred professional, well qualified for this most difficult of jobs. His experience as a youthful activist will serve him well, honing his ability to anticipate the potential attitudes of, and responses to, NGOs and cause-oriented groups. His background as a respected journalist adds to his standing, as does his extensive familiarity with economic issues and the business world, drawn from his years at the Far Eastern Economic Review. Bobi is articulate and personable but tough. He will need these qualities in the job he is assuming this week.

Since I have had some modest experience in this matter, I hope Bobi will forgive my forthrightness in making suggestions.

The first thing you realize is not that the calls never cease, or that the work is never done, even on holidays. It is that a spokesperson has no personal opinions, only official ones. It's your job to reflect the President's views, not your own.

You may agree or disagree with the policy being announced. You may have even argued against it in private, or even curse under your breath the stupidity of an official action. Alternatively, you may have had nothing to do with the decision, having just found out about it by reading the newspapers this morning.

No matter. You must articulate as best as you can the official position of the government. You weren't the one elected to make the decisions, only the one appointed to explain and defend them. Nor is resignation an option every time you privately disagree with a decision. In George Marshal's words, one doesn't resign because the person tasked by the Constitution to make a decision makes one.

Fortunately, you come to the job with a lot of goodwill, both for you personally, and for the President, whom people want to see succeed. The most important requirement for you to succeed is access. You must have essentially unhindered access to the President. Not just by phone, but personally. There are things you can discuss only personally.

Assume the telephones are all tapped; they are. Furthermore, you can only authoritatively speak in the President's behalf if you get to know her, if you are present when issues are discussed and decisions made, if she rewards you with her confidence, if you can anticipate her reactions and know which matters need to be brought to her personal attention for a decision and which don't.

But once you have the access, use it sparingly. Be around only when you must. My own experience is that about a third of your official day will be spent around the President, a third preparing for your briefings, and a third on meetings, interviews and paperwork.

The second essential matter is to have control over the appointment of your own small staff. You may or may not want to have a lawyer to help you dissect and explain legal issues. What is more important is that at least one of your staff members has experience with the bureaucratic maze that is Malacañang. Without this benefit, you will simply not survive. It took me almost four months to get installed the phones needed to do my job. Four months. Government does not follow the dictates of logic or efficiency. So get a guide through the labyrinth.

Treat the members of the press corps with both respect and caution. They can be vexations to the spirit at times. But they are a decent bunch, doing the job they were sent there to do. When you get to know them individually, your affection for them will grow. Give them full access to you and keep your word to them. But be wary of their questions. You need to anticipate their spin. They will try, as is their privilege, to have you say something provocative. There will be times that would try even a saint like Mother Teresa—probably for homicide in this case. You'll sometimes have to take the heat for someone else's mistake. But sparring and adversarial exchanges are par for the course. And this administration comes to office with genuine media goodwill, something the Estrada administration never really had.

It will be extraordinarily difficult but you will have to find some way to navigate the byzantine political corridors of the Palace. Factionalism in Malacañang is a way of life. Isolate yourself and you will have no allies and find yourself cut off from the information stream. Ally yourself with a group and you'll get involved in internecine wars. Expect arrows from the political opposition. More painfully, expect them from behind as well: some of your erstwhile "colleagues" will think nothing of hitting you from the back.

In my view, the spokesperson's job is one of those with an inherently brief shelf life. You should consider asking the President at the earliest time to be allowed to return to the private sector after one year, or, if you prefer, to transfer you to another assignment. Ironically, it will be more difficult for you to leave later on when you are more trusted and yet your effectivity is beginning to ebb. By the very nature of the job, a spokesperson starts to become a liability after a year or so, and a fresh face is in order. Also, you will simply be exhausted physically, mentally and emotionally by that time.

Finally, despite its abysmal pay, horrid working conditions, lack of a personal life, propensity to receiving undeserved daily abuse, it will be the most exciting and interesting job you will ever have. So, as "Desiderata" advises us: "...be gentle with yourself; strive to be happy."

Citizens will pay for pension funds Erap squandered

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

AMONG THE senatorial candidates of the People Power Coalition, Joker Arroyo and Quezon Rep. Wigberto Tañada have been very vocal in attacking the old Estrada regime. But Arroyo is the acknowledged battering ram, which is only in keeping with his role as the House prosecution panel's *berdugo* during Estrada's impeachment trial.

But Arroyo is paying for this attacker role. The deposed president has concentrated his attacks on Arroyo and there is a concerted effort in the opposition to pull him down. In the latest survey, Arroyo has slipped from third to fourth in the senatorial race. Arroyo's fans just have to rally behind him.

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By the way Arroyo's warning to the Puwersa ng Masa candidates is true: they will be fighting among themselves for the last slots in the Magic 13. This means that the Puwersa ng Masa candidates could be cheating one another, using *dagdag-bawas* to get into the Magic 13. This would be ironic, and beneficial to the PPC candidates who are lagging behind, like Obet Pagdanganan, himself once a *dagdag-bawas* victim.

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On the other hand, among the Puwersa ng Masa candidates, the one who's noticeably slipping by the day is Panfilo Lacson. His candidacy cannot but be hurt by the total discredit that has befallen his old PAOCTF. The investigating authorities until now have refused to categorically link Lacson and Estrada to the Bubby Dacer double-murder case and the drug syndicates, but it is difficult at least for Lacson to evade being implicated in these celebrated crimes. This is because his key people, such as Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, his former chief of staff at the PAOCTF, and Supt. Teofilo Viña, PAOCTF Visayas chief, are being accused of playing prominent roles in them.

Many people think pinning down this controversial former PNP officer may be a matter of time and that like his boss, Joseph Estrada, he will have to answer criminal cases that the Department of Justice will file any time now.

* * *

The tack being taken by apologists for Joseph Estrada, such as the incorrigible Korina Sanchez, is that the SSS and the GSIS have been so poorly managed during the administration of Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos that the wanton squandering of the pension funds by the Estrada regime was no big deal. Quezon City mayoralty candidate Sonny Belmonte, who was GSIS manager during Aquino's time, however, has shot down that argument. He pointed out that up to the time that Estrada started using the pension funds for his personal investments in Belle Resources, these funds were in good shape. Belmonte said it was Estrada who destroyed the two people's institutions.

* * *

What the Erap apologists fail to point out is that no president before him had ever used the pension funds for his own personal benefit, not even the unlamented dictator Marcos. He did a lot of things for which he has to account to history, but Marcos never touched the pension funds because he knew how much the lower and middle classes depended on them. Recently on Sanchez's program, Estrada lawyer Sigfried Fortun argued that his client ought to be treated with respect because of his past position. But the question is, did his client respect the people's welfare?

Unfortunately for the people, to put the SSS on the road to recovery, they will have to pay higher premiums. This is most unfair. The churches and the NGOs should make sure the people understand this issue and that this will be reflected in their votes on May 14.

* * *

Estrada says he and his spiritual adviser, Mike Velarde, are being harassed in connection with the grossly overpriced private lands that Velarde sold to the government in the C-5 Expressway in March 1999, less than one year after Estrada assumed office. Was it harassment or the naked use of power for personal gain?

Former Solicitor General Frank Chavez, who was recently appointed pro bono special liaison in the pursuit of the Marcos wealth, points out two details about this Estrada-Velarde transaction that most news accounts missed. First, the actual purchase price by the government constructing the expressway was P45,335 per sq. m., compared to the zonal valuation of the property of only P4,500 per sq. m., and the purchase price set forth in Administrative Order No. 50 of P4,950. The total amount involved in the purchase was P1.227 billion.

Chavez also points out that everything about that expressway deal was rushed and finished in a single day, March 30, 1999. That day, Estrada personally ordered the Toll Regulatory Board to proceed with the acquisition of the lands, after which the deed of sale was executed, transmitted to the Office of the President and approved by that office. Six days later on April 5, 1999, the Public Estates Authority paid 50 percent (P800 million) and on April 29, 1999, the entire P1.227 billion was paid.

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It is not far-fetched to suspect that the reason the deal was done with lightning speed was that generous commissions were paid. The painful irony, however, is that the project had to be shelved after tying up all those public funds, at a time when the government was short of money.

What saddens me personally, because former Public Works Secretary Greg Vigilar is a friend, is that now Estrada is using him as his deodorant. Estrada says the project was "aboveboard" since it was approved by Vigilar whom he retained from the Ramos administration because of his integrity.

Chavez recommends that a case be filed not only against Estrada and Velarde but also against PEA Chair Frisco San Juan, former TRB Executive Director Mariano Benedicto II and Vigilar, whose department had supervision over the TRB.

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The other weekend, the chaplain of our Holy Year pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Fr. Renato Jose Lopez, conducted a Lenten "Christ-centered" encounter-recollection in Tagaytay on St. Francis of Assisi's letters. It proved to be so successful that Father Lopez is doing a post-Lenten recollection on "Some Post-Resurrection Stories," this Sunday, April 22, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the air-conditioned Capuchin Retreat House in San Sebastian, Lipa City. Father Lopez, who is from Sta. Barbara, Pangasinan, studied at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, obtaining his license in Sacred Scripture in 1994. He is now working on his doctorate in Scripture in Rome, while occasionally guiding pilgrims in the Holy Land and other Christian shrines. For inquiries, contact Arlina Onglao of Journeys of Faith Inc., at 929-0144 or 0917-814-8127, or e-mail journeys@info.com.ph; Issa at 534-1663 and Niza at 426-5388.

A word from Bubby Dacer's 'balae'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MY friend, Dr. Socorro "Soc" Reyes, the former executive director of the Center for Legislative Development (CLD), sent this piece, titled "A Solo Parent's Lament." I've decided to use the article not only because it's timely, what with the investigation on the abduction and suspected murder of Bubby Dacer and Emanuel Corbito coming to a head. I'm using it also because it touches on an aspect of the sensational case that is rarely, if ever, discussed.

As most family members of victims of violence can attest, official and public attention is usually beamed on the criminal aspects of a case. Little, if any, attention is paid to the state of mind, heart and body of those directly affected by the violence: the victim's family. Here, then is a piece that gives voice to those usually silenced by tragedy, even if the writer herself admits she is only peripherally involved, though the pain itself is not muted a bit because her only child is caught in the center.

* * *

SO much has been said and written about the disappearance of Salvador "Bubby" Dacer who happens to be the father-in-law of my only child, Chelen Reyes, married to Bubby's second daughter, Sabina. But none has been heard from a single parent like me who has raised her son with her own independent means. In the past five months, I have watched, baffled and unbelieving, as the lives of two young people just starting their family, were wrecked by anxiety, stress and tension as days, weeks and months passed without knowing what actually happened to their father and his driver. They got caught in a web of disinformation relayed through text messages that ranged from the positive to the bizarre.

Though I am currently based in New York (working as Director of Gender and Governance for the Women's Environment and Development Organization), I was on the phone with them practically every day trying to walk them through the crisis. Our conversation was however limited because we knew their telephone line was bugged.

When I finally came home last month, I realized the extent to which their father's disappearance has taken its toll on their personal and family lives. Sabina, always cheerful and vibrant, sunk into severe depression and would not leave her room and talk to anybody for days. My son who was just starting his career in marketing after finishing his MBM at the Asian Institute of Management cannot even go to work. He has to take care of his wife as well as look after their 2-year-old daughter, who often wonders "Where is Lolo?" especially when she sees his picture flashed on the TV screen. For security reasons, they cannot even go out of their house as freely as they used to and have to hire guards to protect them. I saw these two young people spend their days and nights watching television news, listening to radio broadcasts and analyzing between the two of them what might be the truth behind all the reports.

* * *

THROUGH constantly giving press conferences and answering questions from the media as spokesperson of the family, especially when none of the Dacer daughters can do it, my son Chelen, according to a friend, became an "excellent communicator." Though it is flattering for a parent to hear this, the truth is, he was completely stressed out playing this role. He has to watch his language. He has to be as accurate, brief and clear as possible to avoid any misinterpretation. He has to take care not to accuse anybody lest the investigation be jeopardized. After every press conference, an assessment is made to spot weak points and determine how he can be more effective next time. It was a learning process that drained and exhausted not only his body but his spirit as well.

It breaks my heart, as it would any parent's, as I see them saddened and pained day by day, consumed by grief, rage and anguish.

As someone working in the area of democratic governance for the past 13 years, I have tried my very best to assist in rebuilding our democratic institutions and restoring civil society's faith in governmental structures and processes through the Center for Legislative Development (CLD) which I founded in 1988. We initiated programs that built the capacity of the legislature to respond to public needs and demands as well as developed the advocacy skills of citizens' groups to participate in legislative decision-making. To my surprise and dismay however, I discovered during a Forum on Human Rights and Democratic Governance focusing on the disappearance of Bubby Dacer organized by the CLD that for the past 14 years, not a single piece of human rights legislation has been passed by Congress. Neither has it exercised effectively its power of legislative oversight to make sure that international human rights conventions the Philippine government ratified and adopted are adequately implemented.

* * *

NOW that it's confirmed kumpadre is gone, my most sincere wish is for the healing process to begin. But how can healing start when we have the disciples but not the Pilate who ordered the death of Bubby and Awel? As a parent, my prayerful wish is that Sabina, Chelen and their daughter Denise Gabrielle, mark new beginnings and rebuild their shattered dreams. But I am aware that unless the truth is found and justice is done, there will be no peace for them and none for us all.

When will the trial and prosecution of the brains and perpetrators of this heinous crime reach its final and definitive conclusion? When will it even begin? My granddaughter is now 2 years old. Will this be over before she goes to preschool? Or would she have graduated from elementary school by then? Will truth be found and justice done before she asks not only where her Lolo is but why, how and who had him and his driver killed?

i-site from PCIJ and i-adobo

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

IS your congressman sleeping on the job? How well did he represent your district? How often was he absent and "on a mission"? Excuse me, how "poor" did he say he was? How did he vote in the impeachment case against then President Estrada?

Many of us are flummoxed when confronted with the maze and the mystery that is the government. In the face of this, the next best—or worst—thing many people do is to run away in protest. Many Filipinos desperately want to know more about what's going on, but oftentimes they do not know where and how to begin.

i-site is where and how.

i-site (www.i-site.ph) is a new website in the Philippine political cyberlandscape. It is an information website powered by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) and i-adobo.com. It is a road map that is easy to follow, a place that is easy to explore. It offers information on how the government works, the men and women who make it up and the complex web of interests that determine how laws and policies are made.

To get there, one needs a computer, a modem and an internet connection. You need not own these things, of course. You can go to Internet cafés or your next-door neighbor or use your office system when your boss is out for lunch.

"Government is a maze, and politics a snake pit," says i-site's come-on blurb. "Those who explore these areas do so at their own peril. But it need not be so. Information sheds light; citizens do not have to be in the dark. i-site can be a torch."

(I just have to protest though the use of the phrase "snake pit" because it insults snakes and the wildlife that are part of the web of life on Planet Earth. The PCIJ is a staunch defender of the environment so why the politically incorrect language? Like, we shouldn't be saying "leper colony" or "mental retardates" to describe despicable politicians. Just reminding.)

"Information is power," is the phrase that is emblazoned on the i-site's home page. On it are two young girls in St. Scholastica's College high school uniform with the Philippine flag on their sleeves. Hey, you've become computer icons. The photo, I was told, was taken last January in front of the Senate where students kept vigil to press for the opening of the envelope that contained damning evidence that would lead to the impeachment of Estrada. The i-site logo is—you guessed it—an eye.

So what can one search for in i-site? The site has information to help citizens understand the structure and composition of Congress, the Office of the President and local governments. It claims to have the most comprehensive database on government, including a listing of what congressmen own, who they are related to, how they voted and what they did before they were elected to public office. With the help of user-friendly software, the information seeker can search by industry sector, by region or by name.

i-site is regularly updated, so for this election season, it also offers information on candidates. For example, do you want to know how many entertainment celebrities are running? Find out about "celebritocracy."

There is a search window that has a pull-down list of the branches of government. This same list also always appears at the bottom of the page: **President, Vice President, Senate, House of Representatives, Cabinet, Departments, Local Governments, Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Sandiganbayan, Media.**

Once you've chosen, you can even search further. Let's say you chose House of Representatives. Your search can be done on either one of two levels: basic and advanced. For basic search, you can type in a surname and click Go. You can also use the pull-down menu to choose from among groups based on initials of either the surname or the province. You cannot use both.

The advanced search will give you more. You may rank, list or group the information according to variables like education, age, properties, bills filed, relatives in government or business interests. Charts will help you visualize the data. Or you can make your own charts to compare and reveal patterns for your own purposes.

While doing advanced search in the House of Representatives, you can click Total Bills Filed and voila, you'll get a list according to number. The first is Rodolfo Fariñas with 921 bills filed, followed by Narciso Monfort (of my home district in Iloilo) who is a far second with 163. But don't get deceived by numbers. You can examine what the 921 Fariñas bills are all about. There are many *kulelats* with one toothpick each filed and several with 0 ("unreported").

You can check how many relatives they have in their staff. Also, find out the average age of the lawmakers. The youngest, by the way, are Alan Cayetano and Joseph Durano, both 31, and the oldest is Herminio Teves at 81.

Always on the margin of the page are the words **SEARCH, SPECIALS, READ, LEARN, KNOW, BUY, ACT, HOME.** SEARCH simply lists again the branches of government. SPECIALS offers the PCIJ archives. LEARN can tell you about the candidates' campaign expenditures and declared assets and liabilities and more. ACT is a bulletin board where you can post the good and wicked things you're dying to say. BUY—that's for PCIJ's great books.

I have spotted things that need correction, like someone's middle name is actually his wife's maiden name and a new Cabinet secretary's term of office is written as 1998-2001. I clicked Take a Tour but it couldn't take me anywhere. i-site still needs to be polished to perfection but it has dared to take us there, where we should not be afraid to tread.

Visit i-site this summer and discover a new empowering world.

Ah, but I miss the sea and the mountain. A raging river runs through me when I think again of that special place on earth where, for me, a journey ended and began. Happy Earth Day!

Me and Juan Tamad

YOUNGBLOOD

Golda P. Hilario

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

DO you remember the story of Juan Tamad? Well, when we were kids, the older folks kept reminding us not to be like him, a legendary figure but with a negative reputation. But to me, he was a hero.

I could not argue with my elders about their views on Juan Tamad and I never shared with anyone my own opinion of him. I was afraid to be called "*tamad.*" Nevertheless, I tried doing what he did and it was one of the fondest memories of my childhood.

In our backyard, there stood a guava tree. It was the best guava tree in the neighborhood, and my playmates and I climbed it as often as we had the opportunity to do so.

One lazy afternoon; I sneaked out from my siesta and climbed the tree. What was nice about that tree was that it had branches growing sideways, like a mother's arms stretching out, that you could use as a bench or a swing. As I laid down my head and my body against that branch, I saw one luscious and crisp looking guava. I thought that since all things fall, I would just wait for the ripe thing to fall into my hands. So, I just waited and looked at it.

Other people, in my situation, would just have grabbed the fruit. I did not. I enjoyed the solitary period of waiting. I liked the view of the yellow-green thing among the green leaves and the empty spaces through which I could see the blue sky. My mind wondered beyond the tree, soared like a bird across the sky and thought how quiet and colorful it looked. My crayons could never duplicate its color. Never mind how long I waited, because to me time didn't matter.

Juan Tamad might have felt the same thing when he waited for the guava to fall. Who knows? The storyteller did not bother to include this in his story.

More than a decade passed since then and my life has completely changed. Gone are my Juan Tamad days as well as the guava tree. My father cut it when other kids started to destroy our fence. I silently cried when I saw him chop down the tree. With the loss of the tree, I also bade farewell to my childhood.

Patience that involves waiting for long has become hard for me to do. I was caught in a fast world where the only luxury people indulge in is to enter a world of electronic boxes and push the buttons. Everything goes in one click, just like magic. Ironic as it may seem, now I have to pay for an hour's worth of rental in an Internet shop or send misspelled messages from handy gadgets just to tell my friends I am fine.

My world has become dull, governed by one big, frightening clock. It keeps telling me to get out of bed, keep myself tidy and beat my deadlines. I never feel that I have accomplished anything unless I hear that bell reminding me to call it a day or I see signs that another semester is over and vacation has begun. I can imagine how Cinderella felt when the spell was broken by one lousy clock. The thing is, I do not live in a dream world and the same clock is what's making the world move and moving people to act.

In college, the only chance I could get to eat another guava fruit was when we passed by the research laboratory to get samples for our experiments in one course. I was lucky to have enrolled in a small class where only five students took turns in grabbing the fruits of the solitary guava tree while pretending to wash our samples from a faucet nearby.

During vacations, I felt even luckier for every time I visited a farmer's field I would get not only some valuable insights but also a bag filled with red-fleshed guavas.

Still nothing could ever compare to the experience I had not so long ago. But sadly the tree is gone and the memory is fading.

They say that one sign of growing old is when you start your sentence with the phrase "during my time." I have noticed lately that I have fallen into that habit. But deep inside me, I still long to reenter the world of Juan Tamad. And I hope I could bring with me Winnie the Pooh, Timon and Pumba.

How I wish I had known those animated characters but there was no cable TV or VCD in our town during those times. Had those gadgets been around, we would not only have marveled at falling bodies, we would also have gone to other places and sung "Hakuna Matata" and counted the bees.

Now, after a short stint with an NGO, an aborted impeachment trial and another People Power Revolution, I have been attempting to rediscover my old self, the one who idolized Juan Tamad. I have just quit my job and I wish I could lie down all day while looking at a ripe guava and waiting for it to fall. Unfortunately, I still have to find a place where to plant a guava tree and wait another five years for it to bear fruit. And like I said, waiting and patience are no longer my virtues. So I have to settle for sleeping the whole day and dreaming about my idol or watching Pumba, Timon and Pooh on TV. But pretty soon it becomes boring to daydream alone and watch cartoons.

In the meantime, I have to wake up from my dream, face the reality that I should plan what to do with my life, follow the right career path and see where to send my resumé and job application letters. Nothing comes free and nothing remains forever in this world. Like what they all say, one has to move on.

By the way, if ever you come across Juan Tamad, Pooh, Pumba and Timon together, please tell them to wait for me. I long to tell them the story that once, there was this crisp-looking guava fruit, which obeyed the laws of nature. When brother wind blew, the delicious thing fell from the tree, along with Juan Tamad's fan.

Golda P. Hilario, 22, would have nothing to do with government agencies if she can help it.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ....?

Pobre's harassment case

A NIECE of former Supreme Court Chief Justice Andres Narvasa filed a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsman against Professional Regulation Commission Chair Hermogenes Pobre last Sept. 25 for alleged violation of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

In her complaint, Ana (not her real name) said the violation happened on July 20, 2000, a Sunday, when she reported for work to organize her files. Ana, who started working with the PRC on March 18, 1999 and was assigned by Pobre to his department on Dec. 3, 1999 to draft speeches, confidential letters, memoranda and office orders, was surprised when Pobre turned up at 1 p.m. A male co-worker had just left the office when Pobre allegedly started to harass her by praising her physical traits, including a comment that she was "fully breasted." She ignored this out of respect for the man. But he also insinuated that "good-looking men must be hanging around the block." She politely denied this.

Pobre allegedly asked for a kiss and she did so on his cheek and tapped his shoulder. Considering the father-daughter kind of affinity that she thought had developed between them, she found nothing wrong with that. But when Pobre insisted on kissing her, she began to feel scared. She stepped back but before she knew it, his hands were on her face and he was kissing her. She was trembling when she tried to push him away. She added that Pobre ordered her to "let out your tongue." When she broke free, she ran toward the toilet, shaking. When she stepped out, Pobre allegedly asked for another kiss, saying "*masarap kasi.*" She said no, looking him straight in the eye. Pobre then left.

Ana claimed Pobre continued to verbally harass her for the next three weeks. He also allegedly invited her to meet outside the office and go to some discreet place. He hinted that she could have anything she wanted and any position she desired.

When news about the kissing incident circulated in the office like fire, she said PRC officials tried to transfer her to another office. She then lodged a complaint with the PRC but no action was taken. "To avoid his evil intentions," she tendered her resignation on Sept. 13 and filed a case before the Ombudsman a week after.

Pobre strongly denied the accusations and said the kissing incident never happened. He said the complaint was "pure harassment," adding he went to his office that Sunday to attend to some voluminous paperwork. He also accused his "enemies" of cooking up the charges. "I'm cleaning (up) my office so it is possible they're getting back at me," he said.

Case status: The case is presently docketed at the Office of the Ombudsman. Lawyer Sheilah Elbinias-Uyboco, head executive assistant, said the case is still pending "administrative adjudication."

Armin P. Adina, PDI Research Department

Bt corn field trials

THIS concerns the news item last March 19, 2001 on "People power against Bt corn testing."

We view with consternation the threat of the Philippine Greens, a broad coalition of NGOs, mostly funded by foreign interest groups, to stop the farmers in Cotabato from coming up with an independent decision to adopt the Bt technology or not. The proposed Bt field trial's objective is to find out if planting Bt corn can assure the farmers a bountiful corn crop despite the devastating Asiatic corn borer that reduces yields in those parts of the country by as much as 80 percent. Farmers in Cotabato have already tried alternative technologies to control the borer.

In 1975, the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Plant Industry introduced the Trichogramma parasite technology which, according to farmers, does not always work. The Philippine Greens, whose members probably have never planted corn in Cotabato, propose the more ineffective and very laborious technique of detasseling. If they did this, they would have found out that this technique does not protect the young corn plants.

At present, farmers are using a broad spectrum chemical insecticide, Furadan, which not only kills many insects but also farm animals, and also causes nausea and vomiting among farmers. It is also very difficult to apply. This is a granular pesticide that is applied by hand into each corn plant.

Corn farmers in General Santos City who observed the first Bt corn trial are quite convinced that the technology is precisely what they need.

The number of international and scientific agencies that have studied the GMO technology and have concluded that it poses no additional threat to humans and the environment compared to conventionally bred crops include the European Council, the FAO and various national science academies of Brazil, China, Mexico, United States, the Royal Society of UK, the Third World Academy of Sciences and our National Academy of Science and Technology. The Pontifical Academy of the Vatican, while giving a resounding no to human cloning, has given a prudent yes to the technology provided that it helps prevent human hunger.

Although this group opposing the Bt corn field trials is entitled to its beliefs and to preach them, it has no right, whatsoever, to impose its beliefs on the farmers not only of Cotabato but also farmers in the whole country as it tries to waylay a more rational policy decision process based on scientific studies such as the Bt corn field trials.—**SATURNINA C. HALOS, president, Women Association of Scientists in the Philippines; LYDIA JOSON, president, Women in Science and Technology Development Foundation Inc. AND 53 OTHER SIGNATORIES**

LETTERS

Cartoonists are artists too

THE REFERENCE of Neal Cruz to the "*kawawa*" national artist (PDI, 3/28/01) extends beyond those who have been chosen. The nominees, the jury and the award-giving institution itself have become "*kawawa*," no thanks to him.

In any award giving body with a jury that is rife with individual biases, a semblance of an objective decision can be arrived at only after a long process of leveling out strongly held biases. In the case of the National Artists' Award, it may be true that it is indeed losing prestige and respect. But with irresponsible opinions, such as that of Cruz, it will certainly be hurt the more. Being privy to some information, I wish to correct some of his assumptions.

First, Araceli Dans did not nominate Larry Alcala for the award. Alcala was nominated by the UP College of Fine Arts through its College Executive Board. Dans sat as a member of the Council of Peers that deliberated on the merits of each nominee for this much coveted award. The "*kawawa naman si* Larry *at may sakit...*" attributed to Dans to justify her nomination could only be a misquotation, if not an outright fabrication. I personally know her to be a person of integrity, having worked with her in numerous fund-raising activities to augment the meager resources of the college.

Second, Jose T. Joya was indeed nominated. The same College Executive Board of the College of Fine Arts nominated him, as it has been doing these past two years. Joya is indeed a fine artist worthy of the award.

Third, the tone of Cruz's column looks down on cartooning or illustration while exalting painting. He wrote, "*Kawawa naman si* Kiukok *sa* award *na ito, magiging* National Artist *na nga, kawawa pa...*imagine, *dalawang* cartoonists *ang kalaban niya sa* awards." Without any other qualifying statement from Cruz, he effectively reiterated the elitist point of view that painting and sculpture are the fine arts (read: also "high" arts), while cartooning and graphic design are "low" arts.

I wish to point out that graphic design was first introduced in the Philippines by the Spanish colonizers before painting and sculpture as a discipline in an art school. Since cartooning and illustration can easily be discerned and related to by ordinary people, it is therefore "*mababaw, bukya*" in an elitist view that looks down upon popular art such as *komiks* and the like.

Alcala and Coching are more assiduously followed than any other artist in the country. Their works dignify our sense of pride as Filipinos as they reflect the peculiar character of our culture. They helped shape our continuous search for national identity. If these two mortals were born in Japan, it is not farfetched to expect that they would have been declared as living treasures and national artists. The Japanese government builds museums and monuments in honor of its great cartoonists like Rakutin and Tesuka. Even in an underdeveloped and war-torn country like Yugoslavia, a museum for cartoons has been erected, elevating the discipline to a level not unlike that of painting or sculpture. Unfortunately in the Philippines, no such museum exists for the works of our great cartoonists such as Amorsolo, Gat, Soller, Velasquez and Izon, to mention a few.

If Alcala and Coching were ever bestowed the National Artists Award, it would only be tokenism because in reality the government gives no priority to culture much less to artists like them.—**DEAN LEONILO O. DOLORICON, College of Fine Arts, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City**

Prosecute Lacson now

YOUR editorial cartoon last April 1 depicted Panfilo Lacson being haunted by the ghosts of crimes past. Thousands of posters are not enough to hide the grisly human rights record of this former protégé of Col. Rolando Abadilla in what was once known as the MISG.

Even assuming that the charges of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force's involvement in the Kuratong Baleleng rubout and the Dacer abduction are politically motivated, there is growing evidence nonetheless to warrant the prosecution of Lacson for the commission of these gangland-style slayings and cold-blooded atrocities.

If there is any good thing that can come from the circus that is the elections, it should be that skeletons in the closets of politicians are exposed for the public to see.

Only by prosecuting Lacson—Abadilla's protégé and Estrada's hatchet man—will the victims and their families bury their hatchets and get the peace they seek.—**WILSON FORTALEZA, 92 Masikap St., Barangay Central, Diliman, Quezon City**

PCCI an old member of Namfrel council

DELFIN Perez, chair of the National Press Club (NPC) Quick Count Committee, has publicly charged the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) with grabbing the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) from the NPC.

The PCCI is a member of the national council, the highest governing body of Namfrel. In a meeting last March 13 of the national council, lawyer Mike Varela, PCCI president, said it will harness the PCCI's 118 chapters nationwide as well as its 20,000 members to help Namfrel conduct its Operation Quick Count.

The PCCI together with the other business organizations—the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (Finex), Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP), Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI), among others—has been associated with Namfrel since 1984 along with 120 business, civic, professionals, student and labor organizations.

Varela, in his letter to the Commission on Elections chair supporting Namfrel's accreditation, mentioned political stability as necessary to the country's economic growth.—**JOSE S. CONCEPCION JR., national chair, National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel), c/o RFM Foundation Inc., 8th Floor RFM Corporate Center, Pioneer cor. Sheridan Streets, Mandaluyong City**

Media are instruments of capital

LAST March 15, at the Employment Summit in Malacañang, we were deeply moved as the conference tackled the plight of our union's 800 members who were temporarily laid off after the merger of AG&P and DM Consunji Inc.

As President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo answered the challenge of Victor Briz of the party-list group Partido ng Manggagawa and promised to look into our plight, we hoped that, even if the government would not lift a finger to resolve the labor dispute, media would publish our legitimate grievance. But when the news came out the next day, not a word was spoken or printed about the struggle of the AG&P workers. Instead, media focused on the pay hike of government employees.

This deafening silence disturbs our union. Is the hunger and deprivation of 800 workers and their families not newsworthy to media? With the electoral campaign as backdrop, is labor's miserable predicament not an opportunity for media to oblige candidates to become issue-oriented? Does the AG&P layoff—an impromptu yet lengthy agenda of the summit—not deserve attention of the media?

We are thus provoked to question the character of the Philippine media. Despite their reputation as one of the freest in Asia, they seem to be beholden to capital. Since the media are privately owned and subsist on corporate advertisements, no wonder they are used as instruments of capital rather than protectors of the working people.—**TEODORO A. ABUYIN, president; RODELIO R. MALIGO, executive vice president; ROBERTO VALENCIA JR., secretary general, AG&P Workers Union**

Dumping ground for other countries' junk

I FOLLOWED your articles on second-hand trucks. They explained quite clearly why we have too many unfortunate road mishaps involving second-hand trucks that did not conform with standards. In a recent accident in Bacoor, 11 people died.

I regret the fact that our country has become a dumping ground for other countries' rejects and refuse, and that government agencies like the Department of Transportation and Communications, Department of Trade and Industry, and Land Transportation Office are not doing anything about it. Are they not supposed to protect the public by enforcing safety standards? The second-hand trucks are still traded freely, as can be seen from those big advertisements in the newspapers about auctions in Subic and Valenzuela.

It's time that the government took action to protect the public and prevent these accidents stemming from non-compliance with safety standards.—**MARCELO PANDAN, 216 A. Bonifacio Ave., Barrio Galino, Caloocan City**

Back to basics

EXHAUSTED from the day's travel, I had dozed off in the car when I was suddenly jolted by the tune of "Jingle Bells." I thought I had entered some time warp; this was, after all, Holy Week. But "Jingle Bells" it was, and it came from the cell phone of Xiao Li, our driver in Xiamen.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

In China drivers are very much part of the family, or the office. If you're eating out, they join you at the table, and will occasionally jump into the conversation. But they're most talkative when they're driving, as Xiao Li was, with a running commentary on everything from George Bush ("no manners") to real estate prices.

Real estate prices? I'll get back to Xiao Li in a while. I wanted to write a bit about China, which I visited over the Holy Week. I get to go there nearly every year because of medical meetings and conferences, but this trip was the first I was doing with my father, with the Shanghai area as our main destination because this was where he had lived and studied for many years.

I knew that my father's agenda, besides a family reunion, was to show me—the "leftist" in an ultraconservative clan of business people—how capitalism had triumphed in China. This time around then, instead of hospitals and doctors, I got to meet mainly business people and visit places like the Shanghai Stock Exchange and export processing zones.

I will admit I was impressed. China is developing at breakneck speed: look at Asiaweek's chart of economic and social indicators for Asian countries and you will find it has one of the highest growth rates for gross domestic product (GDP), currently running at 8.2 percent (compared to about 3.6 percent for the Philippines).

But you don't need to look at these numbers to get a feel of what's going on. The whole country's being transformed in a way that's unprecedented not only in China but in the whole world, its landscape changing day to day.

Shanghai's east side, Putong, with its gleaming skyscrapers, including the 88-story Jiamen building, makes Makati's Ayala area look like a slum. But while the Jiamen building was awesome, what I found more striking was the housing. In all the cities we visited we saw rows upon rows of high-rise apartments, some completed, others still being constructed. It was the same case in the countryside, where old brick homes are giving way to surreal looking houses, each three or four stories high, usually with a small rooftop "penthouse" topped off with futuristic looking TV antennas consisting of a tower with three steel balls.

Asian economic crisis? It looks like it never affected the Chinese. There are stores everywhere, business going from 8 in the morning well into the night and packed with people who were buying and not just hanging around. Toward the end of the trip, when my father asked me if I was impressed, I answered, "Yes, but..." I won't go into details about my reservations except to say that I meant to capture both my admiration and apprehensions when I said China was developing at breakneck speed.

I did want, however, to give a bit of a more balanced perspective to the claims of a triumphant capitalism in China. I agree, totally, that a free market, including opening up to the world, has spurred China's development. But many people forget to acknowledge, as well, how the state intervened and continues to do so, heavily. I always thought the term "market socialism" was a contradiction in terms, but my visits to China, and especially this last one, remind me how important that "socialism" part is.

Let me elaborate. China's main resource is people, now running to almost 1.3 billion. China has therefore invested in providing for basic human needs. Food, shelter, education and health care are not free, but they're much more affordable than in the Philippines.

This takes us back to Xiao Li, our driver in Xiamen, who kept me enthralled at one point as he jabbered away about real estate prices for both government and private housing. He had, himself, bought a 60 sq. m., two-bedroom apartment in a government housing project for something like P100,000. Yes, he has a landline phone, too, for which he pays 20 yuan a month, about P100—you can talk all you want, he said.

His apartment is some distance from the city center, but the government's housing projects always go with low-cost public transportation lines. You see them everywhere: buses, trains, light rail and in Shanghai, even *dian che* (electric cars) that shoot through a tunnel under the Whampoa River.

My point is that China has been able to free people from having to worry about the basics. This makes for a motivated labor force as well as a huge market of consumers with disposable income. This is the growing middle class that provides the market for other more "luxurious" items such as cell phones and computers.

I don't need to describe our own depressing situation in the Philippines although I did want to mention that what spurred me to dash off today's column were the news about Estrada's alleged housing scams and a news item about the Philippine government's plan to cancel a $140-million loan to expand the Light Rail Transit (LRT). The reason? Neda officials say the LRT has had "reduced ridership."

Business people are always complaining about low labor productivity in the Philippines, but what do you expect when most of the population live in congested slums without basic amenities, and have to commute several hours a day on dilapidated public transport systems, including the still uncompleted LRT? What do we have to offer the Filipino, other than ads to take vitamins to avoid stress from commuting?

Official statistics still say the Philippines is more developed than China. Even if those statistics are right, I think they won't hold much longer. China will overtake us, and they're doing this by daring to dream about world markets, without forgetting to provide for the basics at home.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.org

'Couples' should stay out of partisan politics

LATELY, the Couples for Christ has been dragged into many political activities by some members actively campaigning for a 13-0 victory for the administration's senatorial candidates.

The CFC's Family Ministry director, Tony Meloto, said that the CFC's endorsement is merely an "expression of our community's solid moral and spiritual stand especially in the coming elections."

I am an active member of the CFC and I would like to make a categorical statement that I, along with many of my co-members, are alarmed by the politicization of the CFC and found the so-called "endorsement" in bad taste.

First, although we at the CFC have attained a certain reputation as guardians of morality, we do not pass judgment on our fellowmen.

The CFC has always been a haven for those of us who like to make positive contributions to our communities without engaging in politics.

Although we are a solid group, we still respect individual stands on any issue.

We do not tell voters whom to support. Instead, we respect the Filipinos' capacity to study the qualifications of the individual candidates and choose the ones whom they think would be best for the country regardless of their political affiliations.

Those campaigning for the People Power Coalition candidates said that it would not be the cause for any breakup in the group. I am afraid this is not so. By making head counts on who are the "majority" (those supporting the PPC candidates) and the "minority" (those who made other choices), they are already promoting divisiveness within the group.

Also, I abhor calls by the Council of Elders to make financial contributions to replenish the dwindling funds of the PPC. Already, the CFC is starting to sound like a bunch of political campaigners, which we are not.

I believe that the CFC can better express the community's solid moral and spiritual stand in the coming elections by staying as far away as possible from partisan politics and concentrating instead in evaluating the candidates' platforms and backgrounds so we can all make informed choices when we finally cast our votes in May.—**JEFFREY TAVARES, 13-E Mabuhay St., Teachers Village, Quezon City**

Enfranchising overseas Filipinos

WE in the elagda-OFW egroup really appreciate your editorial, "Certainty," for highlighting the injustice that is taking place as regards the disenfranchisement of millions of overseas Filipinos. We need all the help we can get because there is so much work to be done in the next three years. You have the means and the power to contribute to the passing of this absentee voting bill. We, the NGOs, have the passion and will to see the fight through.—**CATHY LEDESMA, apled@mozcom.com**

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

INVITATION TO BID

A manufacturing plant located at Cavite is inviting qualified contractors to submit their proposal for the design, supply and installation of diesel burner system.

For appointment, all interested parties can contact the Operations Manager at telephone nos. (046) 4191837 Local 29 or (0919) 6036659.

(PDI - Apr. 19, 2001)

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga
Tel. No. 900-06-89, 900-04-74
Fax. No. (0450 900-00-92)

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

PELCO II invites suppliers to apply for pre-qualification and if subsequently found qualified to bid for the SUPPLY, DELIVERY and INSTALLATION of:

Package 004-2001:

I. Security Services
II. General body repair, painting, complete electrical & upholstery (KIA/CERES).
III. 15 KV Current Transformer 10 pcs.
15 KV Potential Tranformer 10 pcs.
120 Volts KWH Meter Form 9 S 9 pcs.
120 Volts KWH Meter Form 3 S 1 pc.
IV. GUAGUA Sub Station fence and steel Gate

The pre-qualification forms may be secured from the PBAC Secretariat, PELCO II Main office, San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga, from April 23, 2001 to April 30, 2001 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ONE HUNDRED PESOS (P100.00). Pre-qualification forms shall be submitted not later than 5:00 P.M. on May 2, 2001.

Pre-Qualification meeting is scheduled on May 3, at 10:00 AM at Pelco II Main Building, San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga.

All pre-qualified bidders may obtain the necessary bid documents after paying a non-refundable fee of FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P500.00) Main office at San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga starting May 4 to May 9, 2001.

Bidding will be announced later. For additional inquiries, please call the PBAC Secretariat at (045) 900-0474 or 900-0850.

(Sgd) ENER D. PANGAN
Chairman
PELCO II – PBAC

(PDI – April 19, 20 & 21, 2001)

1931 - 2001

Celebrating 70 years of tradition

HAS Club of Balanga honors 10 distinguished sons and daughters of Balanga

MESSAGES

Seven decades ago, HAS Club was born through the efforts of our visionary brothers and sisters who labored to create an organization aimed at uniting Balangueños towards the common goal of social commitment and responsibility. No matter how far we have reached and how diverse we have become, HAS Club brings us together and reminds us that we are a people of one heritage, with beginnings in the same town where our hearts will always belong ... our beloved home, Balanga.

On this our 70th anniversary, we have chosen the theme "HAS Club and Balanga Through the Decades" -- connoting an emotional but fond remembrance of what is past. The theme inspires us to remember all those who came before us to make HAS Club the commendable organization it is today. May we look to them for inspiration so that we may continue the Club's vision.

The theme also encourages us to reminisce our earlier days. In doing so, we remember our beginnings in Balanga... and our experiences which have molded us to what we are today. It is therefore but appropriate that we return our gratitude to our community by actively participating in the outreach activities of HAS Club.

I call on my fellow Balangueños to imbue upon ourselves a feeling of community and ignite among ourselves a commitment to serve.

MORE POWER TO US ALL!

Gregorio B. Pastorfide, M.D.
President
HAS Club of Balanga

It is with great honor and enthusiasm that I greet fellow officers, members and friends of He and She Club of Balanga.

HAS Club is now 70 years old and I'm sure you'll join me in saying that this calls for a celebration. Again, we are summoned to express our fellowship as sons and daughters of our beloved Balanga; to demonstrate our commitment to our roots; and to show our love and dedication for the cause of Balanga. Our annual gathering brings fun, but most of all, it brings fulfillment as we dedicate efforts for humanitarian projects like:

•College scholarship for the needy •Financial support for the Provincial Council for the Welfare of Street Children, and • Donations of medical equipment and amenities to the Bataan Provincial Hospital.

Interest and involvement are pre-requisites for commitment. I am fully aware of our growing responsibilities at the home and at the workplace. Priorities will always play a key role and sometimes could be very challenging.

HAS Club has come a long way, and it will continue to count on its supporters ... I sincerely hope you are apt for the challenge as I am.

On behalf of HAS Club, allow me to say thank you for your unending support.

Teresita D. Pizarro
President
HAS Club of Balanga

The He and She Club of Balanga, Bataan, one of the country's oldest home-grown socio-civic organizations, will celebrate its 70th year of founding with a formal anniversary Ball to be held at the Fiesta Pavilion, Manila Hotel, on Sunday, April 22.

The HAS Club Anniversary Night took months to prepare, with officers staying up late at night to finalize details.

Considered as the Great Social Event of the Year by many in the newly-chartered City of Balanga, the celebration will be highlighted with the presentation of awards of recognition to ten outstanding citizens of the city who have distinguished themselves in their respective fields of endeavor. Also expected to grace the affair are the city's who's who, many of whom have gained national prominence for achievements..

One of the main activities of the celebration is the unveiling of a photo exhibit at 5:30 PM featuring a pictorial essay of the town of Balanga, Bataan, from 1931, the year HAS Club was born, up to the present.

On display are old snapshots from the personal collections of the town's old families, including rare photographs of the old Balanga church built during the Spanish era before part of it was destroyed by World War II. For the history buff, Balanga was designated as the receiving area of Filipino and American prisoners of war after the fall of Bataan to Japanese invading force in April 9, 1942.

Dinner is expected to start promptly at 7 PM, to be followed by the formal program.

The night's honorees include:

Ambassador Cesar Bautista who is cited for his distinguished service as a diplomat; Luis Manuel T. Banson for business stewardship; Luz Banzon Magsaysay for humanitarian service; Ismael Austria Mathay, Jr., for public administration; Mel C. Tiangco for public service.

Reynaldo Banzon Vea for engineering-education; Reynaldo D. Pacheco for peace advocacy; Victoria Roman-Flores for business leadership; Henedina Banzon Sison for culinary arts; and Jose Basa Banzon, M.D., for medicine.

For the term 2001-2002, HAS Club is under the joint leadership of Dr. Gregorio B. Pastorfide and Ms. Teresita D. Pizarro.

Distinguished Sons & Daughters in Recent Years (1995 - 2000)

Dr. Robert Anastacio
Dr. Conrado Banzon
Ms. Leonarda Camacho
Ms. Minerva Cornejo
Cong. Emily Lopez
Engr. Pablo Malixi
Ms. Gloria Navarro
Judge Cesar Paguio
Engr. Salvador Tiangco
Dr. Fe Pastorfide
Dr. Greg Pastorfide
Gov. Leonardo Roman
Cong. Pablo Roman
Engr. Jose Valdecañas.

THE HONOREES

LUIS MANUEL T. BANSON
Business Stewardship

Louie Banson is a consummate corporate executive. Aside from being president of 3 corporations: Monark Construction Corp, Concrete Master, Inc. and CMC, he is also chair of Nissan Gallery Ortigas and treasurer of Regalia Group of Companies and Scorpio Land Properties Holdings. He holds directorships in 7 other corporations.

JOSE BASA BANZON, M.D.
Medicine

As a specialist in internal medicine and gastroenterology for the past 25 years, Dr. Banzon practices his profession at the Franklin Hospital Medical Center in Long Island, New York. He is also a member of the board of governors of the Association of Philippine Practicing Physicians of New York. His civic spirit brought him back to Tortugas, Balanga for medical missions from 1995 thru 2000.

HON. CESAR B. BAUTISTA
Diplomatic Service

Cesar Bautista is the Philippine Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. He is also the designated special presidential envoy to Europe - a validation of his excellent service as a diplomat.

VICTORIA B. ROMAN-FLORES
Business Leadership

Vicky Roman-Flores is the president R & B Insurance Corp., and has been elected by her peers to the Board of Trustees of the Insurance Institute for Asia and the Pacific. She also headed professional organizations like the Insurance & Surety Association of the Philippines and the Philippine Association of Surety Underwriters

LUZ BANZON-MAGSAYSAY
Humanitarian Service

Luz Banzon-Magsaysay, widow of the late President Ramon Magsaysay, has received a number of awards for her efforts in various social and humanitarian projects—good work recognized by institutions like the Eye Research Center, Phil. Institute of Public Opinion, the Archdiocese of Manila, EHWA Women's University of Seoul and many others.

ISMAEL AUSTRIA MATHAY, JR.
Public Administration

Mayor Mel Mathay started out as a vice-mayor in Quezon City in 1967. From 1979-1986, he was vice governor of Metro Manila Commission. Then, after 8 years of work in the Batasang Pambasa, he again won the mandate of Quezon City as mayor-a position he holds up to the present.

REYNALDO D. PACHECO
Peace Advocacy

Nandy Pacheco is also known as Mr Gunless Society whose mission is to "eliminate gun pollution in our society". A lawyer, Nandy co-founded the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting, Alay sa Kawal Foundation, and Transparency and Public Accountability Today and Tomorrow (TAPATT).

HENEDINA BANZON-SISON
Culinary Arts

Heny Sison runs the country's most prestigious school for cake decorating and baking. She is an acknowledged authority in cake decorating and confectionary. Heny's other concerns included producing and hosting a TV show. She is currently involved as director in Petal Craft International and Cake Art International.

CARMELA C. TIANGCO
Public Service

Mel Tiangco is the executive director of Bisig Bayan Public Service Office, a TV host in the show Partners: Mel & Jay and the news anchor of Front Page. As of last count, she has received no less than 55 awards for various public service and broadcast journalism achievements since 1986.

REYNALDO BANZON VEA
Engineering Education

Dr. Rey Vea became the 3rd president of the Mapua Institute of Technology in January 2000. His impeccable academic background includes a Ph.D. in Engineering from the University of California-Berkeley, MS in Naval Architecture & Marine Technology in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Our HAS Club Muse 2001-2002

GRACE ANA CONCEPCION PASTORFIDE

Just like any regular fun-loving youngster, Grace likes the movies, browsing the web, pasta, exotic dishes, reading novels and going out with the barkada. Organizing concerts is a side interest. Looking more closely, one sees in Grace a serious achiever who has been a consistent honor student since her early school years. Currently a sophomore and college scholar at the University of the Philippines where she hopes to finish her B.S. Psychology. Grace shines in both academics and extra curricular activities. Only 20, Grace is truly a role model for today's youth. Proud parents are Dr. Gregorio Pastorfide and Dra. Georgina Concepcion-Pastorfide.

The colorful history of HAS Club of Balanga

. *Dr. Palma*

The He and She (HAS) Club was conceived in 1931, an idea of Dr. Andres L. Palma who had just returned from the U.S. He would meet his friends every summer and hold picnics by the Aquino River in Balanga or Ala-uli River in Pilar, Bataan. They enjoyed these outings so much that his friends started bringing their friends and classmates. The attendance got bigger everytime and soon they formally organized the group.

The first elected President was Dr. Palma. Other original members and officers included Dr. Gonzalo Austria, Dr. Aurora Banzon Camacho, Concepcion Banzon-Abello, Carmen P. Banzon-Gonzales, Natividad P. Banzon Magat, Isabel L. Banzon, Dr. Victoria T. Banzon Roman, Codrata L. Banzon-Soriano, Anastacia Banzon-Pastorfide, Concepcion de Leon Naval, Atty. Eugenia L. Banzon-Jose, Damiana L. Banzon, Leonor Banzon-Dizon, Engr. Jose B. Banzon, Col. Jose V. H. Banzon, Vicente Camacho, Rafael T. David, Generosa D. de Leon-David, Consolacion Espino, Dominga dela Fuente, Amado Gonzales, Amanda de Leon, Alfredo L. Mathay, Ismael L. Mathay, Sr., Dr. Jose Manahan, Socorro Paguio Anastacio, Atty. Simeon Raya, Vicente Reyes, Lourdes S. Rosauro-de la Fuente, Engr. Delfin Rueda and Arsenio Tiangco, among others. Their first muse was a beautiful young lass named Milagros T. Banzon.

After graduation of most members from college, they decided to hold a more formal gathering. A dinner dance was held at the Balanga town plaza where they invited the town officials to grace the affair. This was on the 27th of April, the eve of the Balanga town fiesta. The paso doble was the latest dance craze then, so a band was hired to provide the music. This became an annual black tie and formal gown affair.

Even the Japanese Occupation in 1943 did not deter the Club from celebrating its annual tradition, albeit under the watchful eyes of the Japanese soldiers. From 1950 onward, the social affairs were held at the Arellano Memorial High School (now Bataan National School). And in the 1960's, the venue was changed to the Provincial Capitol quadrangle. Members of social clubs from neighboring provinces also started attending the balls.

However, in 1965, HAS Club, for unknown reasons, was not able to hold its annual ball. On hindsight, this was probably due to the shift of the time to discotheques and rock n roll music, rendering ballroom dancing anachronous. This went on through the 80's.

In 1994, Ricardo T. David, a past president (1952 and 1957) thought of reviving the HAS Club. He shared the idea with others who agreed that it would be good for the youth of Balanga to experience an honest-to-goodness ball. Moreover, this would give those working in Manila and other places a good reason to go back to their roots and renew ties with their relatives and childhood friends.

The idea snowballed and soon HAS Club re-emerged. Under the presidency of Balanga ex-Mayor Celso Valdecañas, and with the full backing of Gov. Ding Roman, a formal ball was held on April 27, 1995 at the Bataan Provincial Capitol. Instrumental to the success of this event was the support of many Club's past officers and members. The Club bestowed on Ricardo David a plaque of appreciation in recognition of his persistence in reviving HAS Club.

HAS Club has since persisted and bloomed. Succeeding leaders include Dr. Angel Aquino (1996-97), Nonie Rueda (1997-98), Josephine Camacho and Nonie Rueda (1998-99), Remigio Bernabe (1999-2000), and Digna Calina and Jovy Banzon (2000-2001). Dr. Gregorio Banzon Pastorfide and Teresita David Pizarro were entrusted to be at the helm for term 2001-2002.

The He Club
Recano Studio

IN THE BEGINNING, socials included outings in the countryside. Photo shows HAS Club members out on post-Christmas picnic on Dec. 27, 1933.

For Ballroom Tickets, please call

Ms. Ana Ilagan	- 723-6969
Ms. Fe Camacho	- 897-7174
Ms. Eloisa Floresca	-(047)237-3224
Ms. Baby Jocson	- 749-2030

HAS Club of Balanga Officers, 2001-2002

Gregorio B. Pastorfide, M.D.
President

Ms. Teresita D. Pizarro
President

1931 - 2001

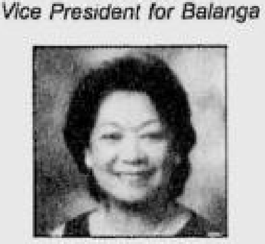
Ms. Ana P. Flores-Ilagan
Vice President for Manila

Engr. Oscar B. Banzon
Vice President for Balanga

Ms. Aurora Fe B. Camacho
Treasurer for Manila

Salud A. Bagalso, M.D.
Treasurer for Balanga

Ms. Carmen A. Oconer-Jocson
Secretary for Manila



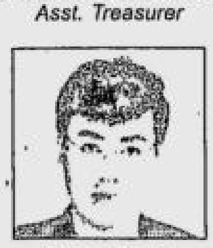
Ms. Eloisa L. Resurreccion-Floresca
Secretary for Balanga

Ms. Remedios R. Bernardo-Navarrete
Asst. Treasurer

Mr. Augusto B. Ramirez
Awards & Recognition Officer

Engr. Manuel B. Camacho
Business Manager

Ms. Aileen B. Banzon
Public Relations Officer



Ronaldo B. Zabala, M.D.
Public Relations Officer

Ms. Grace B. Carandang-Canson
Public Relations Officer

Mr. Mario B. Magat
Auditor

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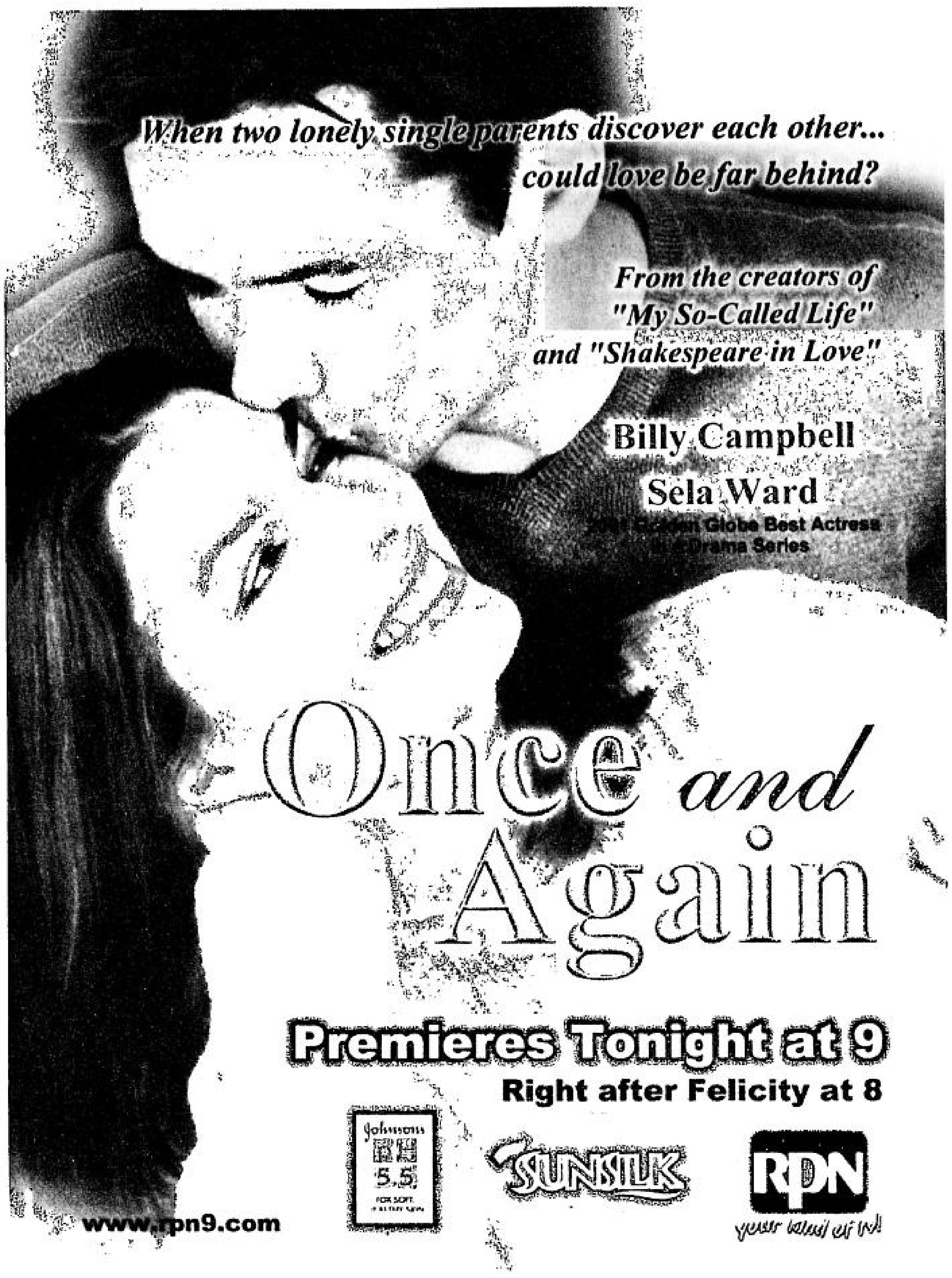


The WORLD

AFTER US PRESSURE

Israel withdraws from Gaza pocket

GAZA CITY—Israel yesterday completed a pullout from a Palestinian-controlled slice of the Gaza Strip it had seized just a day earlier, but denied the about-face was a result of heavy US pressure.

Shortly after the Israelis left, Palestinians fired six mortar shells at a Jewish settlement and an Army post in Gaza, causing no injuries. Israel's brief takeover of a square mile of land in Gaza had been triggered by mortar fire on an Israeli town.

Early yesterday, Palestinian policemen returned to the area briefly held by Israeli troops, inspecting the ruins of one of six police positions razed by bulldozers. Officers checked for booby traps and searched the rubble for files and documents.

In Israel, the withdrawal triggered a heated debate.

On Tuesday, several hours after Israel tanks had rolled into the orange groves and fields northeast of the Palestinian town of Beit Hanoun, the Israeli Army commander of the area, Brig. Gen. Yair Naveh, said his men would remain for "days, weeks or months"—as long as it took to quell Palestinian mortar fire from the area.

However, the Army said yesterday in a statement that Israel had planned to pull out of the area already on Tuesday, but that the withdrawal was delayed until early yesterday for operational reasons. The Army said Naveh exceeded his authority when he spoke of the possible duration of the operation.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon insisted that the withdrawal was not ordered because of the withering criticism sounded by US Secretary of State Colin Powell who said the Israeli takeover was "excessive and disproportionate."

Raanan Gissin, an aide to Sharon, said yesterday that the decision to withdraw was already made Tuesday morning, before Powell issued his statement.

However, government critics said Sharon was trying to pin the blame on the Army in order to extricate himself from the embarrassing situation of being seen has having succumbed to US pressure.

Israel had seized a slice of Gaza after Palestinians fired mortar shells from the Beit Hanoun area at Sderot, an Israeli desert town about three kilometers from the Gaza border fence.

Both actions were seen as an unprecedented escalation of the nearly seven-month-long conflict that has taken more than 470 lives.

Powell's comments were the harshest statement yet against Israel by the administration of US President George W. Bush. The Bush administration generally has been evenhanded in its statements on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, both sides here took last month's visit by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to Washington at Bush's invitation to be a sign that his administration was leaning in Israel's favor. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has not been invited to Washington. *AP*

Experts say Britain's mad cow triggered by African antelope

WELLINGTON, New Zealand—An African antelope imported for a British game park may have triggered the "mad cow" disease which has devastated beef herds in Britain, New Zealand researchers believe.

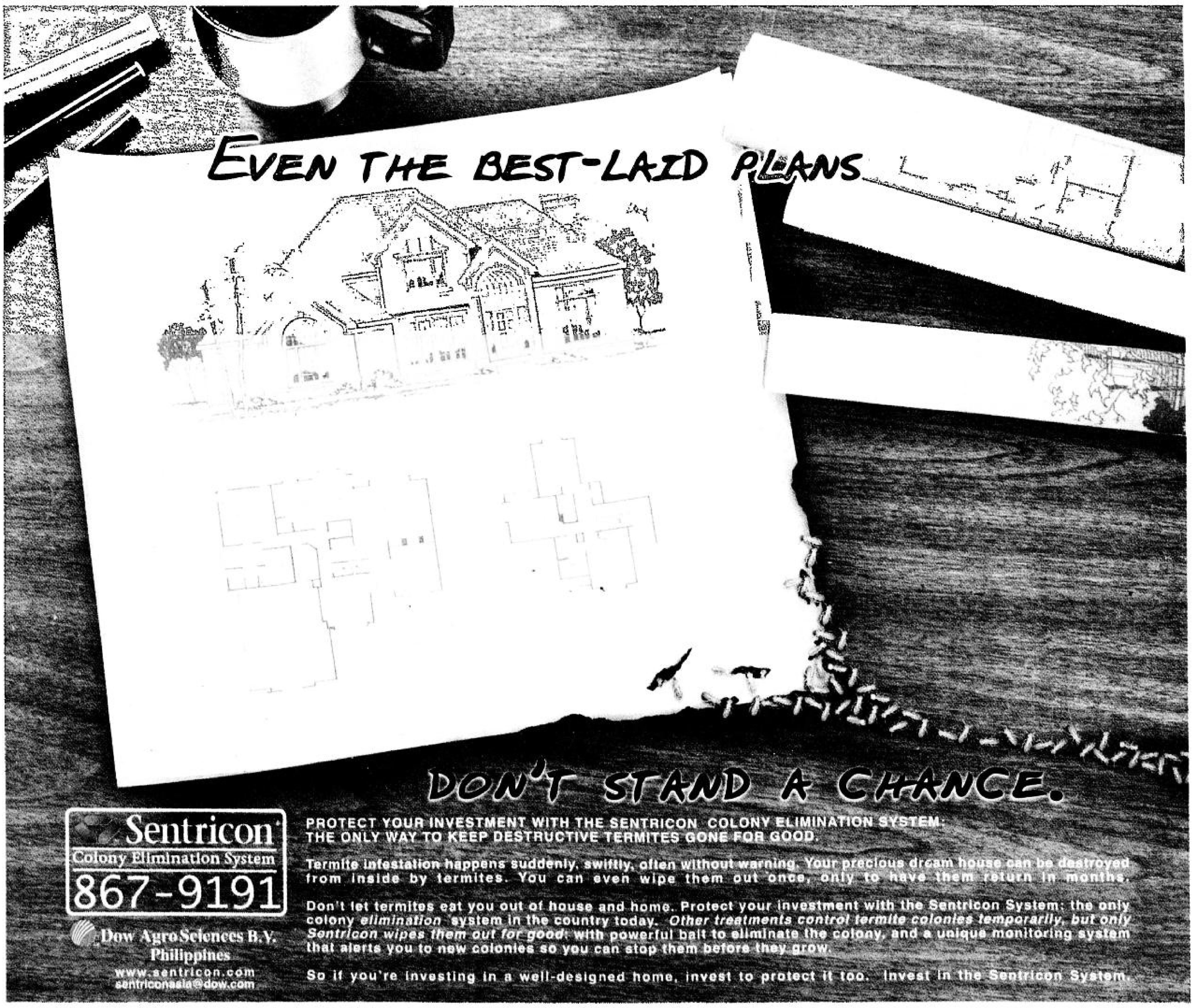
Scientists from Massey University, led by epidemiologist Prof. Roger Morris, is preparing to publish scientific work underpinning the theory, Morris said yesterday.

The team investigated 35 different theories on the cause of the epidemic.

If true, the antelope theory would supplant a widely held belief that bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) originated in sheep infected with a similar disease, scrapie, which were ground up for animal feed.

Scientific papers to be published later this year by Morris and the team will canvass the likelihood that a form of BSE occurs in wild antelope, and spread into British cattle when an infected animal from a wildlife park was rendered into meat and bone meal.

"The area of Britain where it started is the area where safari parks started in the 1970s," Morris told The Associated Press. *AP*



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Drugs from China destroying Asia –Taiwan official

TAIPEI—Drugs smuggled from China are destroying the region, and Beijing needs to shelve political disputes with Taiwan and work with the island to fight the problem, Taiwan's drug czar said yesterday.

About 60 percent of the drugs seized by Taiwanese authorities last year were from the southern Chinese provinces of Guizhou, Guangdong and Hainan Island, said Yang Kuang-chuan, director of the Investigation Bureau's Drug Enforcement Center.

Taiwan's efforts to stop the smuggling of heroin, opium, marijuana and other amphetamines from mainland China "were encountering difficulties because the talks between the two sides have not resumed," Yang said.

"We appeal to you to tell China that we have to talk about this," Yang told reporters during a tour of the bureau's facilities and warehouse for seized drugs.

China and Taiwan split amid civil war in 1949, and since then their leaders have not met. Longstanding disputes about Taiwan's political status have kept the two sides from the bargaining table.

Yang said that drugs produced along the mountainous borders of Burma, Thailand and Laos in the area known as the "Golden Triangle'' were shipped out of China due to lax drug enforcement along China's southern coast.

As of this month, about 81 kg of heroin have been seized in northern Taiwan. From 1990 to 2000, about 17,000 kg of heroin and amphetamines were seized by Taiwanese authorities, Yang said.

Yang said however that many illegal chemists and clandestine laboratories that refine opium from mainland China into heroin exported to North America "have moved out of Taiwan to other Southeast Asian countries."

AP

WORLDBRIEFS

US, China begin meeting on spy plane

BEIJING—Beijing and Washington started talks yesterday about the mid-air collision between a US spy plane and a Chinese fighter jet, which has left the US aircraft stranded in southern China. The two sides were to discuss how to prevent similar incidents in the future, the US demand for the return of the crippled spy plane still on Hainan island and China's call for an end US surveillance missions near Chinese coastal territory. *AFP*

Hashimoto, Koizumi duel for Japan's top post

TOKYO—Japan's closely watched party leadership election has turned into a duel between former premier Ryutaro Hashimoto and maverick reformist Junichiro Koizumi, analysts said yesterday. Hashimoto and Koizumi are cruising along comfortably in their campaigns for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's presidential election on April 24, which will be decided by lawmakers and local representatives of the ruling party. "The four-way race is now turning into a man-to-man fight between Hashimoto and Koizumi," said Nobuo Tomita, an honorary professor of politics at Meiji University in Tokyo. The other contenders are LDP policy chief, Shizuka Kamei and the minister for economic and fiscal policy, Taro Aso. *AFP*

Former Rwanda minister goes on trial for genocide

NAIROBI—A former Rwandan minister has gone on trial for taking part in the genocide in the central African country in 1994, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) said yesterday. The tribunal, based in Arusha, Tanzania, said in a statement the trial of former education minister Jean de Dieu Kamuhanda had started on Tuesday. Kamuhanda, 48, who was handed over to the tribunal by France in March 2000, is only the second of 11 former ministers from Rwanda's 1994 interim government indicted for the genocide to go on trial. Between 500,000 and 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus died in the genocide between April and July 1994. *AFP*

Iraq renews charge that Kuwait is stealing oil

BAGHDAD—Iraq yesterday renewed accusations that Kuwait was stealing oil from fields on their border, a charge Baghdad used to justify its 1990 invasion of the emirate. "The leaders of Kuwait continue to steal Iraqi crude," from the demilitarized border zone set up by the United Nations after Iraq's ouster from Kuwait in the 1991 Gulf War, said Ath-Thawra newspaper, mouthpiece of the ruling Baath party. Ath-Thawra charged that Kuwait's "investment in and development of these border fields amount to theft," an accusation previously denied by Kuwait. *AFP*

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Sen. Loren Legarda

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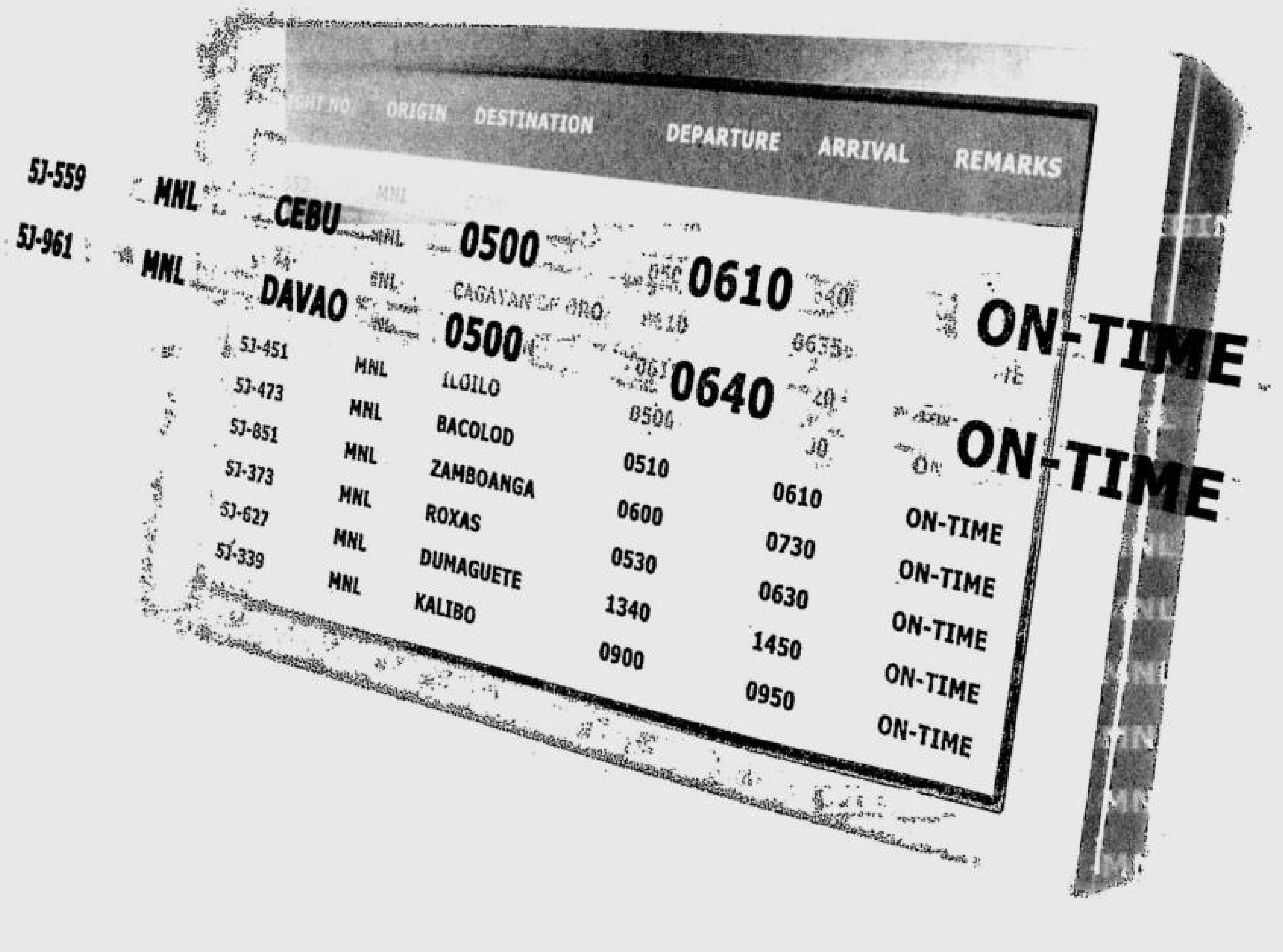

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Bon Voyage, Bangkok Bonanza Winners!

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Messages

Congratulations to the men and women of TPG Corporation (formerly: The Professional Group Plans, Inc.) who will be honored at its 2nd International Sales Forum on April 19-22, 2001 in Bangkok, Thailand.

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The SEC is proud of the record sales achievements of The Professional Group's sales force and its professional manner of conducting business with the buying public. Professionalism is not just a word to the company, it is their way of life.

Mabuhay ang Bayan ng Professionals. Magbuhay Professional!

Hon. Lilia R. Bautista
Chairperson
Securities Exchange Commission

Congratulations to the outstanding sales associates of The Professional Group!

As you celebrate a year of perseverance and hard work, let me take this opportunity to state on behalf of the LBC Group of Companies that we are proud to be partners with TPG. TPG is not only the first pre-need pension plan company in the country but, it is also consistently among the top in the industry.

TPG's proactive and upwardly mobile sales associates serve as an inspiration to all Team Professional and Team LBC members. Continue the excellent work and with us working together we will surely be on our way to be "Second to None."

Again, Congratulations and God Speed!

Mag-Buhay Professional Tayong Lahat!

Carlos R. Araneta
Chairman
The Professional Group

Just as every man is the architect of his own fortune, a company can engineer its own destiny. But, a company is only as good as its people and only when they share the same vision can it succeed.

The Professional Group is fortunate to have in its community people who not only aim high but who also share our mission of helping Filipinos live better lives. Our sales associates passion and industry has not only made them the best among Team Professional but also helped TPG achieve a phenomenal 30% sales growth amidst the political and economic turmoil of last year.

We have successfully hurdled a trying year with flying colors, now we continue our work for all Filipino families, enabling them to achieve a brighter future.

Congratulations to all Bangkok Bonanza Winners!

Mag-Buhay Professional Tayong Lahat!

Francisco J. Colayco
President and CEO
The Professional Group

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Professional Area Manager

Jennifer P. Danlayon
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Top Peak Performing Professionals

Senior Professional Regional Managers

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CAPILI

MARINOR
APRESTO

Professional Regional/Associate Regional Managers

ERMINA
PANTASAN

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MARINOR
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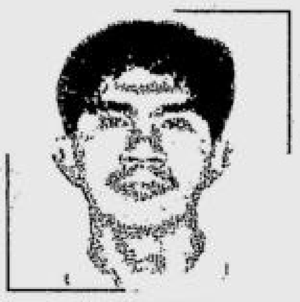
Professional Area Managers



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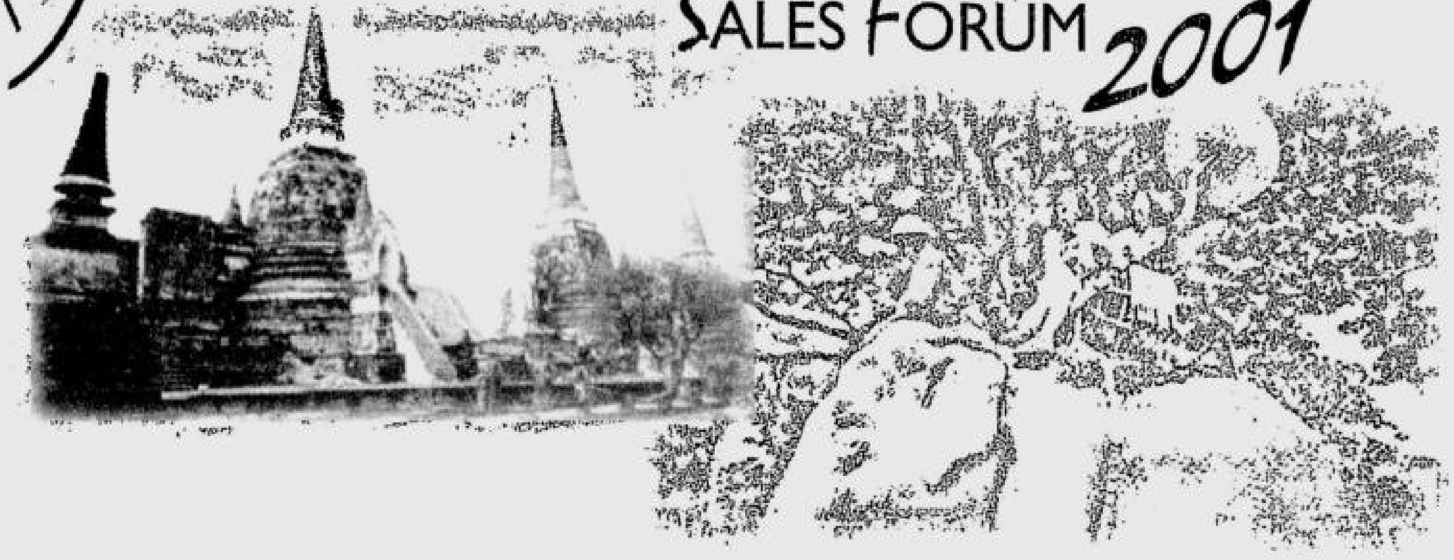

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MARINOR APRESTO

ROSITA LAGOTIN

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ERMINA PANTASAN

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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Mayor shot dead; 4 seized

BY CHRIS PANGANIBAN
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AND CRISTINA ARZADON
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAYUGAN, Agusan del Sur—A mayor campaigning for reelection was killed late Tuesday night, six hours after a candidate for vice mayor and three others for seats in the town council were abducted by still unidentified armed men.

Mayor Lope Asis (LDP-Puwersa ng Masa) was shot dead while shaking hands with residents at a campaign rally in Barangay Cagbas here at 11 p.m.

Vice mayoral candidate Vicente Encendencia and three town council candidates from the Lakas-People Power Coalition were abducted.

'We killed him'

The victims were on board a motorcycle, which was flagged down by seven armed men in Barangay New Salem, 21 kilometers from the town center.

At about the same time in La Paz town, about 40 kilometers away from Bayugan, Mayor Rufino Torralba was taken hostage by suspected communist rebels led by a certain Kumander Jimmy Egod.

Torralba, however, was freed at dawn yesterday, police said.

The Bayugan police said they were still investigating the killing of Asis.

But in Butuan City, a spokesperson of the Nicolas Monteverda Command of the communist New People's Army (NPA) called radio station dxIF yesterday morning and claimed responsibility for the killing, the Associated Press reported.

It said the caller, who identified himself only as Comrade Deric, claimed Asis was a drug lord and was one of seven mayors in Agusan del Sur who have been marked for liquidation by the rebels.

Witnesses said the two gunmen were strangers. Some even thought they were the mayor's bodyguards as they openly displayed their handguns.

Insp. Evelyn Ejercito, Bayugan deputy police chief, said one of the assailants aimed his gun at Asis' jaw and fired.

Abduction

His companion fired several shots upward to scare away and disperse the crowd.

Asis died on arrival at the MJ Santos Hospital in neighboring Butuan.

Ejercito said investigators had yet to determine if the killing was related to the victim's reelection bid.

Bayugan and all 13 towns of the province are not in the Commission on Elections' list of hot spots or areas of concern.

Earlier, seven gunmen abducted Vice Mayor Lorna Amora, the PPC candidate for mayor, her running-mate Encendencia, and council candidates, Adriano Gasvia, Gregorio Burdeos and Francisco Sarmiento Jr.

A radio report by one Boy Monton of Karancho, an active motorcycle riders' group, said Amora was being kept in the house of barangay chair Lucia Leyson.

On April 4, Amora was arrested on charges of malversation of public funds filed by Mayor Asis and other local officials. She was freed after posting a P15,000 bail.

Three of the seven abductors wore bonnets. They were armed with two M-16 rifles, handguns and a shotgun, reports said.

The NPA's Comrade Deric denied any role in the abduction of the candidates.

In La Paz, a police report said the rebels took Torralba from his house before they ransacked the municipal hall. Only three policemen were on duty at that time.

Supt. Julian Delicona, provincial police chief, said he received a report that Torralba was freed at dawn yesterday.

Paoay killing

Delicona cited reports indicating that the abductors used Torralba as a shield when they stormed the town hall. The rebels seized two M-16 rifles, a VHF base radio unit, and a typewriter.

In Laoag City in Ilocos Norte, a barangay chair from Paoay town was gunned down by motorcycle-riding gunmen in Barangay Balacad on Maundy Thursday, one month after a barangay chair in Currimao town was killed.

Police said two of the three motorcycle-riding men, who were armed with an M-16 rifle and a .38 cal. pistol, fired at Jose Cabel, 41, while his Mitsubishi Lancer was cruising southward along the national highway at 8 p.m. Thursday.

Cabel was the barangay chair of Suba in Paoay.

Police said the gunmen, whom they suspected to be hired killers, shot Cabel several times even after his vehicle had stopped.

Investigators are looking at politics, business rivalry and love triangle as possible motives for the murder.

Cabel was with his brother-in-law, William Baddios, 45, and Ryan Crebillo when he was attacked.

Baddios, who was sitting on the front passenger seat, was unhurt, while Crebillo, who was at the backseat, was hit in the left knee by a stray bullet.

Cabel was a known supporter of Paoay Mayor Nenuca Evangelista who is seeking reelection on May 14.

Her rival, Bonifacio Clemente of Lakas-NUCD, has issued a statement denying any involvement in Cabel's murder.

Clemente issued the denial over Bombo Radyo through lawyer Ferdinand Ignacio, legal counsel of Lakas' municipal chapter.

Clemente called for an impartial investigation of the case.

Last month, Edgar Quinto Sr., president of the Association of Barangay Captains in Currimao town, was shot and killed in front of his house in Currimao.

The gunmen shot Quinto while he was with relatives playing mahjong in their house.

Ullah's brother thanks GMA for rescue orders

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A younger brother of kidnapped Filipino Roland Ullah yesterday thanked President Macapagal-Arroyo for ordering the military to rescue the remaining hostage of the Abu Sayyaf bandit group.

Ullah's brother Romy said his family had already given up hope when the then Estrada administration allegedly did nothing to rescue the Filipino dive instructor who was among 21 mostly foreigners who were taken from a resort in Sipadan, Malaysia, last year.

"I am happy. My mother in Malaysia is also happy, including my sister-in-law, Roland's wife. They are anxiously waiting and asking for the latest development in the rescue operation," Romy said.

He said the family was on the brink of losing hope when the military issued a statement that his brother was a "willing victim" of the Abu Sayyaf.

Reports reaching the military had said Ullah was cooking and fetching water for the bandits, and that he was issued his own firearm.

"My brother is a very good man. He is a responsible family man. If he ever did that (carry a firearm, fetch water and cook for the Abu Sayyaf), that's just a way of coping. That's for his own survival," Romy said.

Col. Romeo Tolentino, Task Group Orion chief, had earlier told the INQUIRER that it was very difficult to rescue Ullah and American Jeffrey Schilling because they were "willing victims."

Schilling was rescued in Lu'uk, Sulu, on April 12.

After the rescue, Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva said Schilling was an "unwilling victim."

"I hope and we really pray that the military will not stop its operations until they recover my brother safe and sound. We really miss him and we know that he also misses us," Romy said.

On Sunday, seven suspected Abu Sayyaf members were arrested when two teams of the Philippine Navy's elite special forces raided a lair of the bandit group in Talipao, Sulu.

Joint Task Force Comet spokesperson Col. Jovenal Narcise said soldiers of the Naval Special Warfare Unit 7 were on a combat mission in Sitio Cabungkol, Barangay Tuyang in Talipao when they stumbled upon two bunkers guarded by seven armed men.

The soldiers caught the suspected Abu Sayyaf members by surprise. The bandits, who were reportedly led by a certain Hadji Askalani, were left with no other choice but to surrender.

Narcise said the soldiers confiscated assorted firearms.

He said the bandits first claimed that they were members of the paramilitary Civilian Volunteer Organization (CVO).

Their cover was blown when they were taken to the Joint Task Force Comet headquarters in Bus-bus, Jolo, it was learned. *Julie Alipala-Inot and Jonathan Ma, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ROUNDUP

DECS pilot areas

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Ifugao and Benguet were chosen priority pilot areas for the Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (Sedip) of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports. The $170-million Sedip, a seven-year program aimed at improving secondary education program areas and school facilities, is co-financed by the Asian Development Bank and Japan Bank for International Cooperation. At least 26 provinces in the country would benefit from the project, among them Abra, Mt. Province, Kalinga and Apayao. *Nathan Alcantara, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Tobacco firm attacked

CANDON CITY—Unidentified men fired at a compound of a tobacco flue curing firm in Barangay Tablac here on Monday last week, police reports said. Police said the gunmen positioned themselves at the north portion of the Philippine Tobacco Flue Curing and Redrying Corp. compound. A 20-minute exchange of gunfire ensued between the attackers and the company guards. No one was reported hurt. *Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Covenant signed

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Political candidates i Tarlac began signing a covenant assuring the people of honest, orderly and peaceful elections on May 14. Vice Gov. Herminio Aquino, Pedro Aquino, Tarlac City Mayor Gelacio Manalang and Gov. Jose Yap signed the covenant before Tarlac Archbishop Florentino Cinense, also chair of the Tarlac Convenors Group. Congressional aspirants Gilberto Teodoro Jr. (first district), Alexander Tolentino (second district) and Jesli Lapus (third district) also signed the pact. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Caraga police chief

BUTUAN CITY—Senior Supt. Alberto Olario has assumed the post of Caraga police chief on Tuesday, replacing Chief Supt. Fritz Quiñanola who was reassigned to Camp Crame. During Quiñanola's term for more than two years, Caraga ranked second among the regions with the lowest crime rate in the country. Olario, who served as chief of the legal service office in Camp Crame, warned his men to be non-partisan during the elections "and leave politics to politicians." *Alden Pantaleon, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Geothermal savings

DARAGA, Albay—The state-owned PNOC-Energy Development Corp. (EDC) announced that its Bacon-Manito Geothermal Field generated 580 gigawatt-hours (gwh) of power last year, saving for the economy about $26.2 million in oil imports. The plant manager, Anne de la Cruz, said the figure brought to 4,296 gwh the total steam generation, displacing an equivalent of more than 7.4 million barrels of fuel oil that would have otherwise been imported. "This is a very timely and significant milestone," De la Cruz said. *Roly Embile, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

3 held for drugs

LUCENA CITY—A policeman, an engineer and a policeman's son were arrested by police late Thursday night while allegedly having a pot session inside a house in Purok Masagana, Barangay Gulang-Gulang here. Police identified the suspects as SPO1 Danilo Revilla, 39, of the Buenavista police; engineer Feliciano Argales, 39; and Antonio Ocampo, 25, all of Gulang-Gulang. Police confiscated seven pieces of aluminum foil with shabu residues and two plastic sachets, among others. *Arnel Avila, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

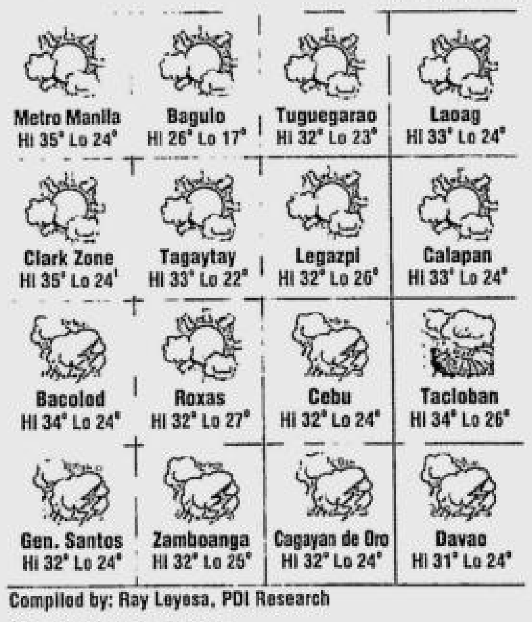
1,231 pupils finish DARE

LEGAZPI CITY—A total of 1,231 pupils from two public elementary schools here finished the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program conducted recently by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology. Senior Supt. Ruben Bonavente, BJMP regional chief, said the DARE program was being initiated in public schools here and would be held in other urban areas in Bicol. "It is the BJMP's home-grown project in support of the government's anti-illegal drug campaign," Bonavente said. Earlier, 1,362 pupils from the Legazpi Port Elementary School, Bitano Elementary School and the Ibalon Central School comprised the first batch that underwent the program. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Eastern Visayas and Mindanao. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA



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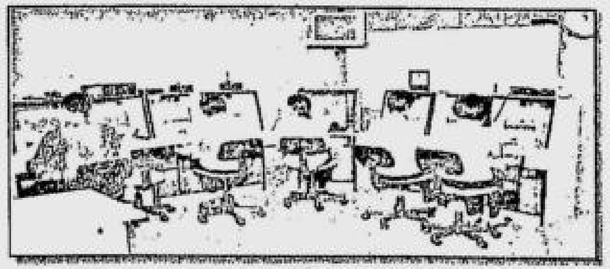

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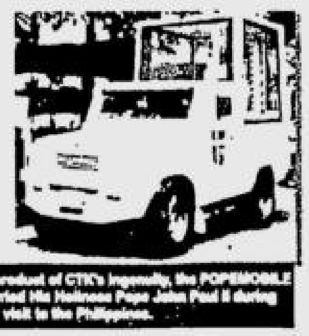

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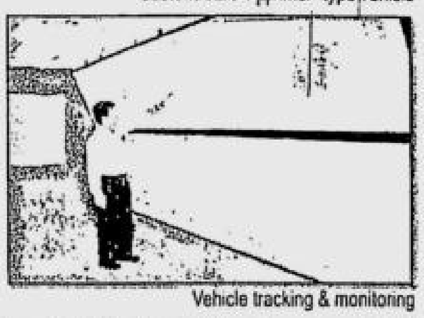

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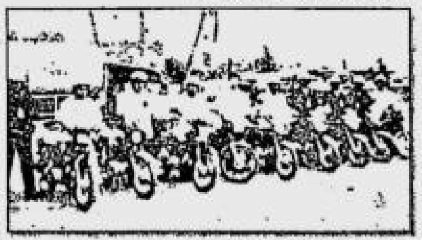

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AN APPEAL TO THE PRESIDENT

For a Fair Treatment of Rural Electric Cooperatives Under the Proposed Omnibus Power Act

DON'T LET ELECTRIC CO-OPS DIE! PROTECT THE RURAL POWER CONSUMERS!

Dear Madam President:

The nation's 119 rural electric cooperatives (RECs) have been the pillars of effectiveness in the government's rural development program.

I am sure you are aware of their accomplishments and the important role they have been playing in countryside development. But what you may not be aware of are the surreptitious attempts by strong vested interests and well-connected groups to use the proposed Omnibus Power Bill as a tool to undermine these noble institutions of rural development for their selfish interests.

I am writing Your Excellency to appeal for the fair treatment of these RECs under the Omnibus Power Bill that your administration has now bravely taken on.

1. The Electric Co-ops Right to Self-determination and Protection against Forced Take-over.

From the earliest stages of this proposed power deregulation bill, certain influential sectors have been lobbying and inserting language to weaken and set-up the electric co-ops and make them vulnerable to easy takeover.

These surreptitious attempts come in various forms, I alert Your Excellency:

a. Forcing Them to Merge.

Provisions for forced or mandated mergers and consolidation of rural electric coops supposedly "to achieve economies of scale." It is clear that the real intent of these questionable provisions has been to make it easier to take-over and gobble up these non-profit utilities.

In the Senate version, the words "mergers and consolidations" were sanitized to "joint actions," a deceptively harmless but potentially dangerous phrase if combined with provisions for "forced corporization and other mandatory reorganization."

b. Weakening the Co-ops

The special interest groups did not succeed in putting in such overt language but succeeded in orphaning the electric co-ops.

Why? Section 45 of House Bill No. 8457 did not mandate any real help for RECs and Sections 24 and 53 even transferred the funding for missionary electrification from the National Electrification Administration (NEA) to Strategic Power Utilities Group (SPUG), another Napocor unit.

The Omnibus Power Bill aims to privatize Napocor, why put the RECs under a unit of Napocor, an institution, destined for legislated extinction?

In effect, this is a subtle and lethal attempt at dividing the RECs by cutting off their traditional technical support system. Thus, RECs will have no recourse at all.

More important, however, is the fact that Napocor has been losing an estimated P2-billion yearly due to the exorbitant perks it has been extending to SPUG projects.

c. Trojan Horse - "Bantay Salakay" Scheme for Monopolization

While I succeeded in putting in some safeguards in the Senate version like mandating NEA to undertake programs to help prepare electric co-ops to operate under a deregulated and competitive environment, many fair transitional safeguards were ignored.

Suddenly, a Trojan horse provision - - Section 28, deceptively titled "Demonopolization and Shareholding Dispersal," surfaced. This provision is actually a devious "Bantay Salakay" scheme to consolidate the ownership of small distribution utilities in the hands of a few publicly listed companies.

I am sure you know who they are, Madam President.

I succeeded somehow in thwarting the scheme by putting in a safeguard to give time to private owners of small distribution companies to list their ownership in the stock market and prevent them from becoming helpless.

But the correct thing to do is to delete this provision for it has no role in deregulation.

Anti-consumer, anti-rural electric cooperative schemes can be this brazen Madam President!

2. Fair Transition Time for Electric Cooperatives

Legitimate stranded costs are acceptable consequences of the transition from a regulated system to a deregulated one. Electric co-ops are similarly entitled to a fair transition period.

Special interest groups, however, have been wanting to abruptly subject the electric co-ops to open market competition. This is a cunning machination that will hasten the death of small electric co-ops. Electric co-ops are still cubs. Subjecting them to open competition is just like throwing them to the lions den. Too young, vulnerable and without any fair chance of survival!

Kindly understand Madam President that the country's rural electric cooperatives have been operating primarily as non-profit cooperatives and not as utilities. They perform a missionary role for rural development. Their primary concern has been to deliver electricity to remote areas in the country whether or not it made economic sense. Consequently, as utilities, their networks are not as efficient.

We have to give a fair transition time for RECs. It is only fair and just to the RECs and the gallant men and women who have devoted their careers to rural electrification.

More important, however, is the fact that it would also be fiscally responsible to preserve the government's P50 billion investment in these rural development institutions.

a. RECs Need Five to Seven Year Transition Time

I asked for a five (5) to seven (7) year transition time to enable the rural electric co-ops to improve themselves as utilities and to be better prepared for market competition. After all, more efficient electric co-ops will benefit consumers and industries in their franchise areas.

b. Stranded Obligations of Co-ops

In the past decades, many co-ops have been saddled by monumental debts that were passed on to them by the government for various rural power generation projects that have failed. Among these government-initiated projects whose costs are still being borne by rural electric co-ops are island diesel plants, dendro-thermal, mini-hydro power projects and expensive submarine cable systems.

These electric co-ops have no chance to rehabilitate themselves and be ready for open competition unless they are unburdened of these debts that were not of their making. Co-op member-consumers are also burdened by P.02 to P.05 per kwh for interest costs.

I proposed that the P4.9 billion debt passed on to them be condoned and reabsorbed by the national government. While it is only one percent of Napocor's stranded obligations it would go a long way in making rural electric cooperatives competitive.

The proposal to expand this condonation to all financial obligations of co-ops in lieu of various transitional safeguards must be reevaluated based on what is fiscally responsible and what will promote electric co-op efficiency in the longterm.

c. Proportionate Opening of Electric Co-op Market as Basis for Competition

I asked in vain for a proportionate opening of the electric co-op market instead of using "threshold voltage" as basis for eventual market competition to save co-ops from financial ruin. That means, if one Megawatt (MW) threshold voltage opens up 24 percent of Meralco's market to competition, then the electric co-ops markets should only be opened up by 24 percent of its market.

Voltage should not be used as a criteria for about 10 years. The reason is, for some electric co-ops - - 1 MW could be 40 percent of their market and it would devastate them financially.

Instead, as recently as February, a new scheme came out in the bicameral version setting the open access voltage at 1 MW in Luzon and the Meralco franchise areas and only .75 MW in the Visayas and Mindanao.

This is obviously advantageous to Meralco which is 70 percent of the Luzon grid and discriminatory to electric cooperatives in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Madam President, those who are manipulating the Omnibus Power Bill for their selfish interest never stop and your Administration should always be on guard.

3. NEA and Electric Cooperatives Reform

The National Electrification Administration (NEA) and the rural electric cooperatives operate under laws that are over 25 years old. Times have changed and lessons have to be learned. The electric cooperatives and NEA itself are facing daunting challenges under the power sector deregulation.

The most judicious and righteous way is to look deeply into the institutional issues and hear the views of all sectors and interested parties. Then, let us craft a special law to update the rules on electric co-ops and cooperative institutions and as electric utilities.

NEA's mandate must similarly be made responsible and realistic given the government's fiscal limitations.

The Omnibus Power Bill is not the right venue for these electric cooperative reforms. The proposed power bill should only touch on electric cooperatives where their operations converge with power deregulation and the need to reduce electric costs to the consumers.

Lastly, Your Excellency, I believe no one including civil society is expecting your Administration to pass a perfect power bill. But it must at least adhere to the basic precepts of anti-monopoly and cartels, sustainable genuine competition, fair and transparent rate setting, reduced and mitigated financial burden to the government and consumers.

It must be an Omnibus Power Bill whose intent and language does not favor vested interests over Filipino electric consumers.

Towards these goals, you have my support and prayers.

Sincerely yours,

JUAN PONCE ENRILE
Senator

Napocor lowers fuel, power rates imposed on distributors

But household consumers will barely feel temporary relief, says Negros group

By Carla Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The state-owned National Power Corp. (Napocor) has reduced by 20 centavos per kilowatt-hour the Fuel and Purchase Power Cost Adjustment (FPPCA) imposed on power distributors nationwide.

The Napocor also froze the FPPCA at its March level of P1.438/kwh.

"It shall be made clear to all electric firms that the rate relief is being given on condition that the full impact of the reduction will be passed on to their own consumers," said Napocor president Jesus Alcordo in Memorandum Order No. 2201-55 dated April 3.

The FPPCA is passed on by Napocor to its power distributors to cover any movement in the domestic prices of fuel and in the cost of power bought by Napocor from independent power producers.

But George Sanchez, vice chair of the Negros Consumers Watch (NCW), said the relief was not what his group was asking for and was not what President Macapagal-Arroyo promised when she visited Bacolod on April 3.

Speaking before a crowd of 1,000 people, Ms Macapagal said she had ordered the reduction of power rates by 20 centavos on top of the suspension of the Power Purchase Adjustment (PPA).

The PPA is collected by power distributors from consumers to pay for systems losses, increases in fuel rates, foreign exchange fluctuations and other losses.

It is the PPA that the NCW and other groups in the country want scrapped. They say the PPA increases by at most 70 percent the rates being paid by consumers.

The government-owned Philippine Information Agency later issued a clarification that what was being reduced by 20 percent was the FPPCA.

The adjustment would translate to a reduction of about P45 in the billing of households consuming about 200 kw per month, the PIA said in a statement.

"As far as we are concerned, what (Ms Macapagal) promised when she was in Bacolod was the suspension of the PPA," Sanchez said.

He said Napocor's temporary relief would be barely felt by consumers, unlike the scrapping of the PPA.

In his memorandum, Alcordo ordered all Napocor area offices to issue a credit memorandum to their clients on the 20-centavo reduction for their billing for the period of Feb. 26 to March 25.

At the same time, he said the Controller's Department would use March's PPCA level in computing for the March 25-April 25 billing and reduce the same by 20 centavos per kwh.

In the case of Negros Occidental, Zosimo Briones, Napocor chief in Bacolod, said the reduction would mean P10 million in rebates to the three electric cooperatives and San Miguel Corp., which buys power directly from Napocor for its plant operation in Bacolod.

He said the temporary relief would mean that Napocor would pay back P6 million to the Central Negros Electric Cooperative, P1.4 million to the Victorias-Manapla-Cadiz Rural Electric Cooperative, P1.7 million to the Northern Negros Electric Cooperative, and P145,000 to San Miguel as rebates for their March bills.

The rebate in the billing of Napocor for March will be applied as part of the electric cooperatives' payment for their April bills, he added.

Baguio prosecutor says hazing law not applicable to PMA

By Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The anti-hazing law or Republic Act 8094 could not be applied to cadets involved in hazing incidents at the Philippine Military Academy here, a government prosecutor said here Tuesday.

City Prosecutor Erdolfo Balajadia said the law applied only to victims who undergo extreme initiation rites as a "prerequisite" to their admission into an organization or fraternity.

"The (objective) of hazing (is) you have to undergo some sort of initiation rites to be admitted. In the case of (Domingo), he was already a member of PMA," Balajadia said.

Balajadia said none of the PMA hazing cases handled by civilian courts, including Domingo's case, could be considered "outright violations of the anti-hazing law because most of the victims were already recognized PMA cadets."

This has forced prosecutors to file murder charges against two of four cadets implicated in the hazing case of Cadet Fourth Class Edward Domingo in March this year.

On April 10, Prosecutor Albert Centeno indicted Cadets Third Class John Louie Ong and Michael Perang for Domingo's murder, based on evidence identifying them as key suspects in the fatal beating of the cadet.

Two other suspects, Cadets Third Class Willard Aperocho and Omar Julius Labajo, were released for "insufficient evidence."

The fiur were Domingo's original classmates until he was turned back for a year for academic deficiencies.

Maj. Gen. Manuel Carranza Jr., PMA superintendent, described Domingo's alleged hazing on March 10 as "good-natured" because it celebrated Domingo's passing marks for that semester.

Centeno discounted hazing because the fatal death could not be classified as "an initiation rite or practice, as prerequisite for admission into membership in a fraternity, sorority or organization, by placing the recruit, neophyte or applicant in some embarrassing or humiliating situation."

The anti-hazing law defines humiliation as situations that compel neophytes to do "menial, silly, foolish and similar tasks or activities or otherwise subject him to physical or psychological suffering or injury."

Last month, the PMA graduating Kaakibat Class 2001 proposed the setting up of a P1-million foundation to support the family of Domingo.

CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Election materials delayed in C. Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—All Commission on Elections offices in six Central Luzon provinces have yet to receive their shares of official metal or paper seals with which to secure the books of 3.9 million voters in the region, Comelec officials confirmed on Tuesday.

Tampering with the voters' list was possible without the seals, which should have been available 30 days before May 14, several municipal election personnel in Pampanga said.

The seals are to be unfastened only by members of the Board of Election Inspectors in the presence of designated watchers of political parties on May 14, election day.

Metal boxes are secured with the seals after the political candidates have verified the names and numbers of registered voters in their areas, a process that has already been accomplished.

Nicolas Fontelera, Comelec regional director, said he had instructed all election personnel to safeguard the books of voters.

One way of eliminating alterations was to encode the names and numbers of registered voters in computer files, which were already done in Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales, Fontelera said.

In most offices, the books are locked in a room.

In Guagua, election personnel have secured the books by binding these with masking tapes bought from personal funds.

But even on Tuesday, other vital election paraphernalia were still not available.

These are the continuous forms (where the names and polling precincts of registered voters are printed), voters' information sheet (list of candidates and sample ballot) and general instructions to board of elections inspectors (tasks and guidelines designated by Comelec).

The poll personnel also complained that the "mobilization fund" intended for campaign monitoring, seminars for election inspectors and forums for candidates had yet to be released.

Posters and calendars of activities for the elections were delivered last Holy Week.

Election officials, however, did not want to distribute these anymore because these contained errors in dates. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Disease kills 111 animals in Negros

BACOLOD CITY—A mosquito-borne disease has killed 111 carabaos and horses in one city and two towns in southern Negros Occidental.

Provincial Veterinarian Renante Decena reported that 111 of the 162 horses and carabaos afflicted with Surra had died in the last five months.

Sixty animals afflicted with Surra died in Kabankalan City, 21 in Ilog town, and 30 in Cauayan town.

The disease usually occurs during summer because the hot weather weakens the resistance of animals.

Blood parasites multiply in the bloodstream, lymphatic vessels, tissues and central nervous system and can be fatal if not treated immediately.

Gov. Rafael Coscolluela said para-veterinarians and technicians were conducting surveillance and treatment to stop the spread of the disease.

Treatment costs about P100 per animal, an amount which poor farmers can hardly afford, he said.

The governor appealed to local government units to help solve the problem. They should support their para-veterinarians because they are trained in diagnosis and treatment of animal diseases, he said. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

'BREAK MUNA'

TOOTS SOBERANO

A supporter of the party-list group Bayan Muna takes a lunch break from his poster campaign in Baguio City.

Ex-solon dies in fire in Bacolod

By Carla Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A former congressman died in a fire that broke out inside his home on Tana Dicang Street, Barangay 39, this city, about 6 p.m. Monday.

The victim, Felix Amante, 93, also suffered serious burns in several parts of the body.

His wife Adela, who was watching TV when the fire broke out, was able to get out of the house.

The fire was believed to have been caused by faulty electrical wiring at the bedroom of the victim's grandson, Felix Eduard Amante, on the second floor of the two-story house, said Senior Insp. Jerry Candido, Bacolod fire marshal.

Amante, who was trapped on the second floor, was found sprawled beside his bed by firemen. He was declared dead on arrival at the Riverside Medical Center, Candido said.

Amante was the first mayor of Bacolod when it became a city in 1951. He was also appointed governor of Negros Occidental and served from Sept. 16, 1953 to June 6, 1954.

In the 1960s, Amante was elected congressman.

He was director of the Bureau of Prisons during the term of President Diosdado Macapagal.

Although he no longer ran for elective positions, candidates constantly sought Amante's endorsement because of his influence in the city.

Kin to plant trees for 131 victims of Air Philippines crash

By Jowel Canuday
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Today, 131 mahogany seedlings will be planted in the Island Garden City of Samal in memory of the 131 people who died a year ago in the country's worst aviation tragedy.

Volunteers, friends and relatives of the victims of the Air Philippines Flight 541 crash will plant the seedlings alongside the 18-km road from Samal's City Hall to the crash site at Sitio Kamanlangan in Barangay Camudmud.

Dr. Ma. Veronica-Deniega, who lost four relatives in the crash, said the mahogany trees were chosen because these can last more than a century and will serve as "living reminders to present and future generations that this tragedy should never happen again."

Running priest Robert Reyes will join the volunteers and relatives who will plant the trees 120 meters apart as they jog their way to the crash site.

Reyes will also lead a 30-minute prayer from 6:50 a.m. to 7:10 a.m., the estimated time the plane went down a year ago. He will celebrate Mass at the crash site later in the morning.

Another 131 mahogany seedlings will be planted by the victims' relatives in one corner of the crash site, which the Samal government plans to develop into a "stone and tree park."

Cleto Gales Jr., Samal administrator, is negotiating with landowners to acquire the 3,000-square meter area where the plane crashed. Talks between the landowners and Air Philippines executives collapsed last year.

Unmarked graves

Cleto said 131 boulders would be placed beside the mahogany seedlings to be planted at the crash site. The boulders, shaped into a quadrangle, will serve as unmarked tombstones.

The quadrangle will be filled with white pebbles so that the area will resemble a traditional Japanese garden.

Deniega said the crash victims would be remembered as martyrs because they served as their inspiration in the search for justice and in pushing for reforms in the country's transportation safety procedures.

The management of Air Philippines has also prepared a separate Mass at the Davao Memorial Park where the remains of other unidentified victims were buried.

Cesar Millares, Air Philippines manager here, said round-trip plane tickets were given free to some 50 relatives of the victims who are coming from Manila and other parts of the country to commemorate the death of their loved ones.

But other relatives will not join the Air Philippines-sponsored Mass.

Deniega said she and other members of the Flight 541 Group Association, an organization formed by relatives of 40 of the victims, would instead stage a rally in front of the Davao International Airport before proceeding to Samal for the tree planting.

Dr. Carlos Tolosa Capitan II, Flight 541 Group president, said the rally would be held at 7 a.m., in time for the expected arrival of the first domestic flights from Metro Manila and Cebu, to remind incoming passengers of the tragedy.

Capitan said the rally aimed to challenge the passengers to join their cause for reforms in the aviation industry to ensure that such tragedy will not happen again.

'Unacceptable'

It will also serve as the relatives' expression of protest and anger over the "unacceptable" results of the probe conducted by the four-person Independent Investigation Committee (IIC) that declared pilot error as the most probable cause of the crash, Capitan said.

The investigation board, chair by retired Air Force Chief Gen. William Hotchkiss, was created by then President Joseph Estrada in response to demands by relatives for an independent investigation.

But Capitan suspected a whitewash in the IIC probe in an effort to protect Air Philippines owner Lucio Tan, reportedly the biggest campaign contributor in the Estrada presidential campaign in 1998.

Capitan said the Hotchkiss committee report was inconclusive as it failed to incorporate data from the plane's Flight Data Recorder, a device that records the plane's altitude, air speed and heading.

The Flight 541 Group plans to pursue criminal and administrative cases against officials of the Air Transportation Office, the management of Air Philippines and even the manufacturer of the aircraft in the United States.

Raps poised vs Baguio road contractors

By Desiree Caluza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said they were readying charges against contractors of the Baguio Circumferential Road project for illegally cutting trees in the project area.

The officials said the contractors had been indiscriminately cutting trees since February although a permit has yet to be issued to them.

A DENR investigation team has found 54 stumps of assorted trees in the Bakakeng-Ciudad Grande area, one of the places affected by the P300-million project.

Along Balacbac Road, the team discovered three fresh stumps of pine trees while uprooted trees were found along excavated slopes of the road going to Marcos Highway.

The Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) here said 1,269 pine trees would be cut while 451 saplings and 115 seedlings would be removed from areas that will be affected by the project.

"(But) this is just the initial inventory. If we would come up with the final inventory, (the number of trees that would be affected) would reach 2,000," a Cenro official, who asked not to be identified, said.

"Based on our investigation, these contractors have already undertaken the task of cutting the trees without any permit because they have to give way to the road widening for the circumferential road."

In a press forum on Wednesday, the Department of Public Works and Highways regional officials said only 948 trees would be cut and 451 saplings would be removed in the eastern and western links of the BCR project.

Joseph Sacley, barangay chair of Happy Hallow on the eastern link, said the villagers welcomed the construction of the circumferential road but they opposed the cutting of trees along the watershed area.

Sacley said 1,000 trees would be cut in their barangay based on their inventory.

He said the people would not support the project if it would affect their farmland and watershed.

Of the P300 million allotted for the project, P30 million would go to residents whose lands would be affected.

Lacson to be summoned

(From page A1)

Dacer's children also sent word to the Senate that they would either attend themselves or send a representative.

The PNP and the National Bureau of Investigation hold five PAOCTF officers, including Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña, and seven civilian agents who are suspects in the Nov. 24 abduction and murder case.

The task force members were under the command of Lacson, Aquino and Mancao at the time.

"We are not out to tarnish the reputation of anyone by making a wild accusation. So we are pursuing the case. I consider this case unfinished," Perez told a press conference.

Mendoza confirmed yesterday that the government had evidence showing that at least 12 PAOCTF officers and eight civilian agents were involved in abducting Dacer and Corbito and later strangling them and burning the corpses in Indang, Cavite.

He presented four PAOCTF officers and four civilian agents to the press.

Crying

Perez revealed that before the presentation, one of the suspects, SPO4 Mariano Soberano, approached him crying.

"*Tulungan po ninyo ako. Kami po'y pinaniwala na legal ang aming ginawa. 'Yun pala ginamit lang kami* (Help us. We were made to believe our actions were legal. But it turns out that we were being used)," Perez quoted Soberano as saying.

"I asked him to give me the name of the mastermind. Until now, no one has delivered any information leading to this," the secretary added.

Mendoza said that the suspects voluntarily surrendered and sought protective custody "for fear that they might be subjected to abduction, and worse, to summary execution, due to their involvement in the disappearance of Dacer and Corbito."

Assisted by a lawyer, Soberano confirmed Mendoza's claim.

Soberano refused to name the person or people who gave the order to kill Dacer, but promised that he and his fellow suspects would reveal the identities of the masterminds at "the proper time" and in "the proper forum"—court.

Perez told reporters that "the statements given (by the suspects) named only those who killed and burned Dacer but I strongly suspect that they know who gave the order."

'Airtight case'

During a news conference, Mendoza confirmed that the police had a "major breakthrough" in the case, and said that police investigators are building up the case against the suspected masterminds.

The police chief turned over physical and documentary evidence, including sworn affidavits executed by the suspects, to Perez at Camp Crame headquarters yesterday.

Perez and Interior Secretary Joey Lina also assured reporters that authorities were building an "airtight case" against the suspects and the supposed masterminds.

Mendoza said that Lacson, Aquino and Mancao could be summoned "any time."

Perez said the PAOCTF suspects acted on orders from "higher ups" to liquidate Dacer.

But, he added, "we don't want to make premature announcements until we have an airtight case against the masterminds. There are two to three masterminds—plural."

"The NBI is now trying to determine whether there is a need for Lacson to testify to explain his side. I believe it is in his best interest to voluntarily show up instead," Perez said in another impromptu news conference.

Negotiations

Eight of the suspects—Insp. Bobby Lancaoan, Soberano, SPO3 Jose Escalante, SPO1 Mauro Torres and civilian agents Crisostomo Purificacion, Renato Malabanan, Jovencio Malabanan and Rommel Rollan—were presented by Mendoza to Perez and Lina.

Mendoza said PAOCTF resources such as high-tech surveillance equipment, high-powered firearms, three vehicles and safe houses were used to carry out the murders.

Eight of the 20 suspects remain at large. Viña, former PAOCTF-Visayas chief, was not presented to the media because he was still under "tactical interrogation," Mendoza said.

The suspects at large include PAOCTF officers Glenn Dumlao, Vicente Arnado, Benjamin Taladua, Mario Sarmiento, William Reed III, a certain Villanueva, Ruperto Nemeno and civilian agent Digo de Pedro. Arnado is reportedly in Hawaii.

"Negotiations are under way for Supt. Dumlao, a trusted man of Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, special projects officer of PAOCTF, to spill the beans on the big bosses at the PAOCTF who may have a direct hand on this case," Mendoza said.

The INQUIRER reported Monday that an intelligence source said that some of the suspects during interrogation claimed that Dumlao relayed an alleged order from then President Joseph Estrada to kill the suspects.

Estrada angrily denied the report the next day, saying he would file a libel suit against the INQUIRER.

Perez said that "we can't envision that these PAOCTF officers killed Dacer and his driver without anyone prodding them to do so."

Asked if authorities had any evidence that would link Estrada to the case, Perez said: "I have no evidence yet to show Mr. Estrada is involved. Once we have evidence, we will make the proper announcement."

Long-running feud

The PNP and the NBI vowed to collaborate in their efforts to unmask the masterminds as soon as possible.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said one of the angles being pursued as a possible motive for the killings was an alleged long-running feud between Lacson and Dacer.

Wycoco revealed that Dacer even wrote several letters to now deposed President Estrada asking the latter not to appoint Lacson as PNP chief.

"In one of Dacer's letters to Mr. Estrada, Dacer was concerned about the selection process and asked the then president to recommend as PNP chief anybody but Lacson," Wycoco said.

Chief Supt. Nestorio Gualberto, chief of the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, said Dacer was placed under surveillance by the PAOCTF officers in 1999.

Asked what took the suspects so long to get the publicist, Mendoza said: "It was only in November that they found the opportunity to finish off Dacer."

It has been reported that Dacer and Lacson's feud allegedly began when Lacson rebuffed the PR practitioner, who wanted to handle his PR campaign. According to the report, Dacer turned to Lacson's rival, his predecessor Roberto Lastimoso Jr.

Dacer ran Lastimoso's media campaign against Lacson, according to insiders.

Lastimoso retired from the service after Lacson accused him of coddling drug syndicates. Lacson took over Lastimoso's post.

Lacson, 52, retired from the service and joined the senatorial race after Joseph Estrada was ousted in January. Aquino and Mancao went on leave.

Hearing

The Senate human rights committee, chaired by Senate Minority Leader Rene Cayetano, invited Lacson to today's hearing "to shed light" on the PAOCTF's involvement in the case, said Cayetano's legal officer Lani Grace Songco.

Also invited to the hearing were Mendoza, Lacson's successor Director Hermogenes Ebdane, Gualberto, Wycoco, NBI Deputy Director for Special Investigative Services Chief Carlos Caabay and NBI-NCR Regional Director Samuel Ong.

Dr. Raquel del Rosario-Fortun of the UP College of Medicine, the forensic expert hired by the Dacer family, is also expected to attend the hearing.

Cayetano said in a statement that he was glad that Dacer's children have decided to be present or to send a representative.

"I understand how important it is for them to hear from the authorities once and for all what exactly happened to their father," he said.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the Senate committee on national defense and security, said he expects a "lot of questions" to be answered in the hearing.

"I am attending this hearing because this is a very serious issue that must be clarified because if this issue is not clarified, it could contribute to a lot of instability in our country," Biazon told reporters.

Biazon said it is important that the real culprits in the crime be identified and charged so that innocent people who have been dragged into the case can be cleared.

But the senator chided the PNP for "building up cases in public slowly and piece by piece."

Lina readies court cases

As if things weren't going badly enough for former members of the defunct PAOCTF, Interior Secretary Lina yesterday prepared to compile an inventory of crimes against task force members in anticipation of charging them in court.

Lina ordered Mendoza to prepare an inventory of cases allegedly committed by PAOCTF officers, in the wake of President Macapagal-Arroyo's abolition of the task force.

"The abolition . . . should not mean that those involved in criminal activities can go scot-free. They must be made to pay for their actions," Lina stressed.

The moment the inventory is finished, Lina said, cases against erring PAOCTF personnel will be filed in court and administrative proceedings will be instigated against them.

Lina's directive came in response to the clamor for the PNP to look into several criminal cases allegedly involving PAOCTF personnel, such as the controversial "Kuratong Baleleng rubout" and alleged wiretapping activities.

PAOCTF agents have also been accused of a string of criminal activities, including kidnapping and drug trafficking.

President Macapagal formally abolished the PAOCTF on April 16 to eliminate a "shadow organization within the PNP." ***With reports from Alcuin Papa and Gerald Lacuarta***

They never pleaded for their lives–witness

(From page A1)

In another press conference, Director General Leandro Mendoza, Philippine National Police chief, said Dacer was subjected to mental, emotional and physical torture for 10 hours before he was finally killed.

Dacer "was tailed since 1999, abducted like a kidnapper, interrogated and tortured like a suspect and murdered like a criminal. The bosses of the suspects made it appear it was a legitimate police operation," Mendoza said.

Fearing for his life and those of his family members, Lopez, the brother of arrested suspect Jimmy Lopez, surrendered to NBI National Capital Region chief Samuel Ong at 2 a.m. yesterday.

William claimed that there were 12 agents and civilian informants of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force who brought the two victims to his garage in Indang, Cavite, about 5 p.m. that day.

The victims' hands were tied behind their backs and their heads were wrapped with packaging tape, leaving only their nostrils exposed.

Around 8 p.m., 10 of the 12 suspects accompanied the two to a nearby creek, which was about 300 meters from the garage, Lopez said.

"(With their wrists tied) and heads covered with packaging tape, the two were ordered to walk to the creek," he said.

Upon reaching the creek, SPO1 Mauro Torres and a civilian, Digo de Pedro, went further down the creek, while Lopez and the other PAOCTF agents stayed at a distance, he said.

"It was dark. We were only using flashlights. But I'm sure it was Torres who strangled Dacer," Lopez told reporters.

In a report based on other sworn affidavits, Chief Supt. Nestorio Gualberto, PNP chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, confirmed that it was Torres who strangled Dacer to death.

Torres tied both ends of a rope to a piece of wood, placed the rope around Dacer's neck and twisted the wood, tightening the rope, Gualberto said.

"With the blindfold on, Dacer was pinned to the ground. His body was shaking for several minutes as he was being strangled so slowly to death. He could not put up a fight because two other men were holding his two feet still. He could not even shout because his mouth was taped," Gualberto said.

He said that civilian informant Digo de Pedro did the same to Corbito.

Five meters away

Lopez's elder brother, Jimmy, and Alex Diloy were nabbed by NBI agents in Buna Lejos I, Indang, Cavite, last month.

Diloy executed an affidavit saying the younger Lopez strangled Dacer while De Pedro, who is still at large, strangled Corbito.

But Lopez said he was "sure" that Torres killed Dacer. He said he was about five meters from Dacer when Torres murdered the publicist.

The INQUIRER reported earlier that Torres, who was interrogated by intelligence agents, allegedly confessed to strangling Dacer.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said Lopez's "substantial revelations" would further strengthen the charges against PAOCTF agent-suspects.

Lopez corroborated reports that the bodies of the victims were burned.

Wycoco said Lopez's confessions had corroborated the statements made by other suspects.

'Legitimate operation'

"All of them claimed they were told that it was a legitimate operation against bad guys and criminals. But the victims turned out to be Dacer and Corbito," Wycoco said.

Based on the results of investigations and the sworn affidavits executed by the 12 suspects, Mendoza said there were several "layers" and "groupings" that implemented the elaborate plan to murder Dacer.

He said the masterminds portrayed the slain PR man as a leader of kidnap-for-ransom and drug trafficking syndicates.

He added that there were several "layers" so investigators would find it difficult to pin down the real culprits.

William Lopez said his only part in the crime consisted of owning the garage where the two victims were brought after they were abducted on South Superhighway in Manila.

He stressed that he did not know that the two were going to be murdered. "*Napasabit lang. Parang nasang maling lugar ako sa maling pagkakataon. Nandoon ka na, di ka na makakaiwas,*" he said, adding that he had not known Dacer or Corbito.

He also said he did not know who ordered the abduction and killing.

Lopez refused to comment when asked by reporters if there were other instances when PAOCTF agents had brought unknown victims to the area to be executed. "I don't know," he said.

NBI-NCR executive officer Jun de Guzman said the bureau is likely to recommend Lopez as a possible state witness.

Justice officials are considering placing Diloy and Jimmy Lopez under the government's Witness Protection Program.

Gualberto said that one of the vehicles used in the killing, a gray Mitsubishi Adventure, was issued to Supt. Glenn Dumlao, a suspect in the case.

Mendoza identified Dumlao, who remains at large, as a "trusted man" of Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, the special projects officer of the former PAOCTF.

The Adventure was recovered when it fell into a ravine on its way to Baguio City to deliver campaign materials of former PNP and PAOCTF chief Panfilo "Ping" Lacson Jr., Mendoza said. The police officer who was supposed to deliver the campaign paraphernalia was charged with electioneering.

Metrobank

Based on the sworn affidavits of suspects, Gualberto said Dacer was tailed from his house on Nov. 24 and abducted nearly an hour later, or around 10 a.m.

In his April 16 report to Mendoza, Gualberto noted that "Dacer was about to meet former President Ramos at the Manila Hotel for a conference. A day before the abduction, he met deposed President Estrada at Malacañang, together with (Caloocan City Rep.) Baby Asistio. Allegedly, there was an unpleasant meeting with them." *(Ed's note: The meeting took place on Nov. 22, two days before Dacer's abduction.)*

In his report, Gualberto said Dacer and Corbito were blindfolded and their hands were tied behind their back after they were seized.

He said they were brought to the back of a Metrobank branch in Dasmariñas, Cavite. The team was allegedly led by Insp. Vicente Arnado, who called up SPO3 Jose Escalante to join the group

While on the way to Cavite, the suspects allegedly kept on threatening Dacer and Corbito, telling them that they would be killed.

Apart from Arnado, the others who were there were Dumlao, Insp. Bobby Lancaoan, SPO4 Benjamin Taladua, PO3 Mario Sarmiento, SPO3 William Reed III and a certain SPO2 Villanueva.

Arnado and Dumlao instructed Escalante, Taladua and Soberano to get rid of the victims, who they thought were kidnappers

Interrogated

Dacer and Corbito were brought next to Barangay Buno Lejos in Indang and were turned over to the team of Torres and the Lopez brothers around 1 p.m., Gualberto said.

There, Dacer was allegedly interrogated harshly while blindfolded. The agents threatened to kill him if he refused to tell them about his supposed kidnap-for-ransom and drug trafficking activities, Gualberto said.

After the suspects killed Dacer and Corbito and set the bodies on fire, they waited for at least two hours before leaving the area, making sure that the corpses were charred beyond recognition.

The suspects then went back to the Metrobank branch to get the Revo owned by Dacer. They brought the vehicle to Lopez's garage-safehouse in Indang for safekeeping.

Two days later, Soberano, Escalante and Torres disposed of the vehicle by pushing it into a ravine in Maragondon, Cavite.

Employers, workers oppose SSS increase

(From page A1)

Malacañang to assure the public that the plan was not yet final.

Presidential spokesperson Renato Corona yesterday admitted that any increase in SSS contributions "has far-reaching effects not only politically."

"Something like this is not decided just at the spur of the moment. This has got to go through very serious actuarial process or study," he said.

The SSS had said that it would raise the monthly dues this year after it posted a net loss of P3 billion last year largely because of its bad investments in the stock market during the Estrada administration.

(In the banner story by Pinoy Times publisher Vic Tirol on Monday, the INQUIRER inadvertently reported that the SSS posted a net income of less than P3 billion last year. It should have been negative P3 billion or a net loss of P3 billion.)

President Macapagal-Arroyo said on Tuesday that the proposed increase in monthly dues would be accompanied by a corresponding "increase in benefits."

In Davao City, the Mindanao Business Council (MBC) and the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) said it would not be fair to pass on to the public the responsibility of keeping the pension agency alive by raising the monthly contributions.

Felix Irag, KMU-Southern Mindanao secretary general, said raising the SSS premium was like punishing the innocent and saving the guilty in the questionable SSS transactions.

Insensitive to workers

"The move to increase SSS premium is downright insensitive to the plight of the workers who are still suffering from government's continued refusal to grant our much-needed wage increases," Irag said.

Irag also said government should institute measures in recovering the money by seizing the assets of the cronies of Estrada who were allegedly involved in the SSS transactions.

MBC chair Joji Ilagan-Bian said the SSS plan was unacceptable, as it would impose additional burden on both the employees and employers at a time that business was performing badly.

Bian said employers contribute at least 10 to 20 percent of their employees' premiums. She said many employers would not be able to afford an increase in SSS dues.

"Why is it that every time a government-controlled agency is mismanaged they always pass on the burden to the public? In the first place, we are not part of that transaction so they should not make us suffer for it," Bian said.

She urged Ms Macapagal to encourage the new SSS officials to observe transparency and to consult members before making arbitrary decisions like raising SSS dues.

Bian said SSS investments under the Estrada administration failed partly because the SSS failed to keep the transactions transparent.

The MBC chair said raising the SSS premium was the "easiest way out" for the government but would be too costly for its members.

She said it was the responsibility of the new officials of the pension fund agency to conduct diligent studies on how to save the SSS without burdening its members.

At a hastily called press briefing, presidential spokesperson Corona said that while the SSS was still "in the process of making a final decision" on the proposed increase certain groups in the Macapagal government were "advocating for an increase."

Corona said the SSS was eyeing other measures to help the pension fund recover losses during the Estrada government.

"They are studying several options," said Corona, who attended the Cabinet meeting Tuesday at which SSS chair and president Vitaliano Nañagas II briefed the President on the financial health of the SSS and the moves they were taking to help the fund agency get back on its feet.

He said that Nañagas was planning to dispose of non-performing pieces of property.

Nañagas also assured the Cabinet that the SSS would only invest in blue chip stocks and in firms with "good track record, reputation."

But an SSS executive yesterday said the pension fund's financial situation would not improve soon because of a lackluster economy.

"In the near future, the situation will not improve much because of the general economic conditions and of member loans policy," SSS chief actuary Horacio Templo said in a statement sent to the INQUIRER.

He said SSS earnings from stocks would remain paltry because of the weak equities market. The state pension fund would also be hurt by low interest rates on fixed-income investments, he said.

Templo stressed, however, that the SSS would remain solvent until 2015, not 2003 as earlier reported.

Reports that the SSS would run out of funds two years from now because of its investments in "crony" stocks were "unfounded and exaggerated," he said.

Claims exceed contributions

Templo admitted that the SSS had found itself in a situation where claims were already exceeding contributions.

"The reality is that all social security funds throughout the world face the negative financial effects of an improved lifestyle and increased longevity. Pensioners receive pensions for a length of period way above the expected life expectancy determined in the 1950s, and workers prefer shorter working time and informal employment arrangements," he said.

"In other words, there are more pensioners and less contributors than anticipated, and this has led to many pension funds being inadequately funded," he said.

Templo said the solution to this problem should have been increasing contribution rate from 8.4 percent to 10 percent.

"But this solution has been unacceptable to and repeatedly rejected by the stakeholders in the past 10 years, when the problem was first presented," he said.

The SSS has addressed the problem by investing more in stocks, which offered higher returns than fixed-income instruments.

Templo reported that from 1991 to 2000, the SSS earned P126 billion from its investments in stocks and fixed-income instruments.

Last year's earnings from stocks and fixed-income instruments, however, fell substantially, and there were signs that the years ahead would be just as disappointing.

Templo reported that after record figures of P16.3 billion in 1998 and P17.2 billion in 1999, the SSS' income from its investments fell by P6.2 billion to P10.977 billion in 2000.

"Surely, the investment performance in year 2000 was a disappointment and a few investments made in prior years will continue to be problematic," he said.

He did not explain the huge drop in the SSS' investment income.

Officials of the current administration had said deposed President Joseph Estrada "gutted" the SSS.

The new SSS president "has looked at the finances of the SSS and it's true that in fact the resources of the SSS were gutted by the previous administration," Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said.

Nañagas said the SSS incurred losses of P8 billion from bad investments during the Estrada administration.

I knew Bubby . . .

(From page A1)

to gather news for Naga Times.

They were curious about a story in the Philippine Graphic that described Daet as the situs of the most disciplined police force in the country.

The visit was followed by a second and a third one.

Dacer would sometimes visit me on Sundays, not in my office, but in my home at our coconut plantation in Barrio Mampurog.

I would invite Badong to join me, my wife and five children for a bath in the river.

To a fault, I would treat Badong with kindness because he was the illegitimate son of a rich Español who did not recognize him as his own. When Badong became rich, the old Dacer struggled to be recognized as Badong's father. The old man's failed efforts were perhaps the embodiment of God's vengeance.

A year and a half into my term as mayor, I resigned in 1961 to run for a seat in the House of Representatives on the ticket of my law professor, then President Diosdado Macapagal, under whose tutelage I learned public speaking.

In that congressional campaign, Badong stuck it out with me. He did errands, wrote speeches and prepared articles favorable to me. We won.

Surprisingly, Dacer politely refused my offer of a job.

Instead he asked me to introduce him to media big shots like Joe Guevarra, Doroy Valencia and Napoleon Rama.

I did not know these newspapermen. How could I? I was merely a *provinciano*. However, when the papers reported that I was one of the 10 outstanding congressmen in 1962, just four months after I assumed office, Guevarra and company took interest in me.

As he met media owners and big businessmen, Dacer made himself scarce. But he would sometimes give me a ring to ask if there was anything he could do for me. That made me feel good.

Sometime in 1963 or 1964, I bumped into Badong at the Filipinas Hotel. Manila Mayor Arsenio Lacson invited me for coffee and he hollered "Bubby, meet Congressman Pimentel."

Not only did Dacer have a new name. He was also a picture of self-confidence.

He succeeded in crashing the inner sanctums of the rich and powerful in Manila. He now stood tall and polished and walked with a swagger as if to say "I shall conquer."

Indeed, he conquered. When Lacson made a trip to the toilet, I nudged Badong saying, "*Oragon ka,* Bubby *na ang pangalan mo ngayon* (You're smart. Now you're called Bubby)."

He let out a loud laugh, embraced me and said, "*Hindi naman ako makakalimot sa inyo. Ikaw pa rin and aking* mayor *at* idolo (I don't forget you. You're still my mayor and idol). My closest friends know that."

I was elected governor in 1972. I lost track of my friend, Badong. Every now and then I would hear from friends that he had become a public relations man who hobnobbed with the influential and powerful.

He was driving a Buick or Oldsmobile and was maintaining a luxurious office on Escolta, which, I thought, was the exclusive domain of the Zobels, Buencaminos, Marsmans, Nielsons, Sorianos and Dys. Dacer was by now extra rich.

How did Bubby bump into such incredible wealth?

When I last saw him in 1984, or thereabouts, at the Manila Hotel, he was all in white—white shoes, white socks, white pants, white shirt and patches of white hair to match. I suspect he also had white *carsonsilyo.*

Let us stray for a minute. What follows was confided to me by my *compadre*, the late Leandro Verceles.

When Verceles was governor of Catanduanes, a Chinese-looking fellow by the name of Moises Tapia came to see him at the capitol. The governor beckoned him and asked what he wanted.

"I am from Pandan, Catanduanes. I want to run for congressman," Tapia said in Bicol. My *compadre* inquired, "Are you telling me that you will do battle with the Albertos?"

"Yes sir, if you will support me," Tapia said.

Unbelieving, Verceles propounded, "Do you have money?" "Yes sir," he said as he pulled out a briefcase stuffed with a bundle of cash.

"How much is that?" the governor asked. "Five million *po,*" Moises replied. "Ah, you have money to spend, ha?" Verceles said.

Tapia pushed the briefcase toward the governor and said, "I'll not spend that. This is for you."

The governor and Tapia flew to Manila the next day to see then Vice President Salvador "Doy" Laurel, president of the Unido party. "Senator, I want this guy to be my candidate for congressman," Verceles said. "Whatever you say," was Laurel's reply.

Tapia defeated the Albertos. Never in the history of Catanduanes, or any province for that matter, was currency seen flooding in the streets.

Congressman Tapia thought it would be best to take oath before his people. He chartered a helicopter. Because of foul weather, the helicopter crashed not far from the shores of Virac before the very eyes of thousands of people. Tapia and the pilot died instantly.

How did Tapia acquire his fortune? Perhaps the reader would recall a well-known personality who was escorting a truckload of freshly minted money from the Central Bank, following the success of People Power I. The man was intercepted by authorities and crates of money were confiscated from him. But not before he entrusted two huge crates to Tapia for safekeeping. Tapia had a dilapidated *bodega.* His friend said "I shall retrieve these crates tonight."

Tapia waited for him the whole night, the whole week, and the entire month, stretching his vigil to six, seven months until he became curious what was in the crates. He forced them open and P2 billion lay before him.

Not knowing how to spend the money, he thought of returning to Catanduanes—which he had forsaken since he was 9—and ran for congressman.

What the heck has this fairy tale got to do with Salvador Dacer? Well, the congressman left behind a lovely widow, a Chinese mestiza. It is common knowledge in the Bicol region that Badong wooed her.

Let me emphasize that Dacer was already an accomplished multi-millionaire when he met her.

Such was the life and times of Dacer. It seems that Badong's life will end in the valley of the fallen. But not yet.

We, his friends from Bicol, keep on praying and hoping that like Army Maj. Noel Buan he would resurface.

But if my colleague from my bygone mayor days truly would not reappear, I bid you adieu, my friend. *Mabalos (thanks)* for all your assistance in our campaigns.

Desierto seeks Erap's early arrest

(From page A1)

Remulla accused Desierto of "showing political color in filing so many cases that were later dropped" and of allowing the Office of the Ombudsman "to be used for political persecution."

Estrada himself grumbled about having been forced to go to the Sandigan on Monday to surrender because of two arrest warrants issued against him that day. He also went on to post bail for four other cases to preempt the issuance of other warrants.

"They've really turned my trial into a circus. Warrants were issued against me, yet all they wanted was to humiliate me by making me go to the Sandiganbayan to post bail, and afterwards dropped some of the cases against me," he said over radio station dzEC yesterday.

He was referring to Desierto's move on Tuesday to withdraw five of the eight complaints filed on April 4 against him so prosecutors could focus on the plunder case.

Probable cause

Desierto said the amended complaint would show probable cause to warrant the arrest of Estrada and his co-accused—his son Jinggoy Estrada, Charlie "Atong" Ang, Edward Serapio, Yolanda Ricaforte, Alma Alfaro, Eleuterio Tan and Delia Rajas.

"For plunder to exist, there must be a showing that at least three instances of criminal acts were committed by a public official to illegally amass wealth in excess of P50 million," he said.

Thus, Desierto said, the amended complaint would contain "specific" details on the three grounds for plunder in which Estrada allegedly earned at least P4 billion—P130 million from tobacco excise taxes, P545 million from "jueteng" bribes, P189.7 million from the purchase of Belle Corp. shares, and the P3.2 billion "Jose Velarde" account.

"For example, in the earlier complaint we indicated the total amount of the anomalous transactions in the purchase of Belle shares of stock by the Government Service Insurance System and the Social Security System," Desierto said.

"In the amended complaint, we will thresh out the specific amounts spent by the GSIS and SSS in purchasing the shares on Estrada's behest," he said.

Filing an amended complaint will also allow the Ombudsman to ensure that the plunder case—the gravest case to be lodged against a former president—will be airtight.

"We will also convert the (monetary) figures into words for easy reading of the justices," Desierto said. "The plunder case will be very detailed so that there will be no impediment in the other graft cases."

Desierto said the filing of an amended complaint was an offshoot of the Ombudsman's withdrawal of five graft cases against Estrada.

"The amended complaint will also ensure that the plunder complaint will not mention the grounds cited by the other remaining cases (perjury and illegal use of alias), and vice versa," he added.

Desierto maintained that his move to withdraw the five cases would speed up the trial of the plunder case.

"We don't want Estrada's lawyers to delay or stop the plunder proceedings. We don't want that to happen. We're not saying that there would be double jeopardy if we pursue the other cases. We just don't want Estrada to again go to the Supreme Court and stop the proceedings," he said.

He belied the claim of Estrada's lawyers that the withdrawal was an explicit admission by the Ombudsman that the cases were weak.

"If our move was wrong, then they should be laughing at us now. They should be happy. On the contrary, they are angry because we preempted their move," Desierto said.

Climbing floors

Speaking over dzEC, Estrada was particularly sore over the fact that "I had to climb the first floor, second floor, third and fourth floors" of the Sandigan whereas "it could have been arranged that I sign all the papers (pertaining to my bail) in just one room."

The Associated Press quoted Fortun as saying that if Estrada were ordered arrested for the non-bailable charge of plunder, "I would move that he be put under house arrest on the grounds that as a former head of state, he is entitled to all the respect, considerations and courtesies due him."

At the press conference, Remulla and the other speakers—senatorial candidates Ricardo Puno and Juan Ponce Enrile of the Puwersa ng Masa—agreed that the withdrawal of the five charges "weakened" the government's case against Estrada.

"Does that mean that those cases were without substance (*walang laman*)?" Puno wondered aloud. "Withdrawing them was an act of swallowing his (Desierto's) pride."

Enrile, however, conceded that in a strictly legal sense, "what Desierto did was correct."

"Withdrawing the graft charges was correct because graft is already absorbed as an element of plunder. You cannot commit plunder without committing graft, like through falsifying documents . . . The Ombudsman used his brain, for once," Enrile said.

But Gerry Albert-Corpuz, information officer of the militant fisherfolk group Pamalakaya, said Desierto had "no right" to do what he did.

"The people have strong evidence against Estrada. We demand that Desierto and his men cease and desist from this foolish act," Corpuz said in a statement.

Incomplete documents

Justice Anacleto Badoy Jr., acting chair of the Sandigan's third division, said it was still determining probable cause in the plunder and two other cases it was handling.

Badoy said that the division had received only one set of 35 folders of evidence pertaining to the cases, and that the Ombudsman had yet to send two other sets for its two other justices.

He said the plunder case was being contested by several of the accused, who had asked the court to send back the case to the Ombudsman for preliminary investigation.

"The court took no action on the motions for the reason that it has not yet acquired jurisdiction over the person of any of the accused," he said.

One of the two other cases raffled to the third division concerns allegations that Estrada and several others violated the code of ethical conduct for government officials. The other deals with allegations that some Ilocos Sur officials falsified public documents.

Badoy said that while the Ombudsman wanted the ethical-conduct case withdrawn, this was still "under consideration" by his division.

The plunder case and the two other cases are part of the batch of 11—eight involving Estrada—filed by the Ombudsman before the antigraft court.

One of the cases involves former presidential legislative liaison officer Jose Jaime Policarpio, who posted bail of P6,000 the other day at the Sandigan.

Policarpio was named in the indirect bribery case after it was alleged that he was the "JimPol" being referred to in the log book submitted by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis Singson on the jueteng issue.

According to Singson's testimony, "JimPol" received P2 million a month from jueteng collections from November 1998 to August 2000.

Policarpio had denied that he was the "JimPol" being referred to in the log book. *With a report from Martin P. Marfil*

Cops sweep Sandigan for bugs

(From page A1)

A member of the debugging team said the group was ordered by Philippine National Police chief Director General Leandro Mendoza to "clean" the court's telephones.

But the team member, who spoke on condition of anonymity, refused to say what they discovered when they swept the lines.

Asked what his assessment was and if the lines could be considered cleared, he said: "*Siguro, okay naman* (Maybe they're OK)."

He said there were many ways of listening in on conversations, adding that most phones could be tapped using the right equipment.

One equipment, he says, is a sophisticated device called the "G-track" that could monitor simultaneously 700 phone conversations whether these be made on cellular or landline telephones.

A government unit, he revealed, once had this type of apparatus but he was told that it was now "missing." He refused to disclose the name of the agency.

Oplan Payapa

For his part, Sandiganbayan Sheriff Ed Uriarte said they had started coordinating with several agencies like the PNP and the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation on security arrangements. He said they drafted a plan called "Oplan Payapa" to deal with security problems that could crop up once the Sandiganbayan acts on the Estrada cases.

"This plan will take effect once the hearings start, (once the court) acquires jurisdiction over the cases, or (once) the accused is arrested," Uriarte said.

The plan calls for the doubling of the security force currently at the court, the use of canine units and the setting up of security systems to thwart any attempt to bring in guns or explosives.

But the sheriff denied that there was a "debugging" operation on phones being used in the Sandiganbayan. He said the men interviewed earlier by members of media were merely members of the PNP Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) unit.

Interview with justices

Newsmen have been hounding the Sandiganbayan justices, hoping to get an interview with them.

Justice Anacleto Badoy Jr., acting chair of the court's third division that will preside over the plunder case, was forced to violate his "no interview" rule yesterday after newsmen camped out for about four hours outside his office.

"I must first apologize (for keeping you) waiting. But you see how very busy we are here today, during these days . . . As I said, I have made it a very strict policy not to allow interviews on any pending case," Badoy said.

"However, many of you said that you have been interviewing me before when I was in the Constitutional Convention, in the Comelec, in the Batasan, when I was in the Senate as Senate secretary. But as I said, this is a different ballgame now. The reason why I am doing this is that I think it will help me do a good job and I am sure all of you want all of us here to do a good job," he added.

Then he read a prepared statement and asked newsmen not to ask any further questions.

Erap asks for 2 gifts on his 64th birthday

(From page A1)

"I thank her for that, although that greeting may just be accidental because she was just asked by reporters (to say something for my birthday). *Maganda naman ang kanyang sinabi, magkaroon daw ako ng katahimikan sa aking puso* (She said something nice about having peace in my heart)."

The deposed president can expect a lot of prayers from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. But at the same time, the CBCP urged Estrada to reflect on the legacy he has left the country from his two and a half years in the presidency.

The Estrada incumbency had been marked with frequent clashes with the Catholic Church that was never comfortable with a head of state who owned up to womanizing and fathering several children out of wedlock.

Schedule

Estrada's first stop for the day will be the San Lorenzo Ruiz Chapel at the San Juan Resettlement Area in Taytay, Rizal, his pet project since he was mayor of San Juan. There he will hear Mass at 10 a.m.

After lunch at Taytay, he will motor to the Payatas dump in Quezon City; then on to North Triangle also in Quezon City; and to Smokey Mountain in Tondo, Manila. It was here that even after his fall, he received one of the warmest receptions from a Metro Manila crowd.

On her own visit, President Macapagal had to endure the heckling of Smokey Mountain's pro-Estrada residents.

Estrada will end his daytime schedule with a 5 p.m. visit to the Associacion de Damas Filipinas Settlement House on Quirino Avenue in Paco, Manila. He rebuilt the orphanage after it was gutted by fire two years ago.

So, Estrada will be keeping his usual birthday routine. What bears watching would be his well-wishers at his Polk Street residence.

"I'll just be celebrating with my close friends, those who have not abandoned me," he told the INQUIRER in Filipino, when asked how else he would celebrate his special day apart from mingling with his loyal *masa*. *With a report from Norman Bordadora*

Thanks, Ed; Inquirer family will miss you

(From page A1)

But his memory lives in his coworkers at the INQUIRER.

Ed served as "gatekeeper" of all editorial files. But aside from that, said IT department head Gary Libby, Ed "single-handedly" trained a number of editorial personnel in computer use.

The lot included layout artists who used to work manually with stripping knives, Libby recalled. "Now they work using a mouse, thanks to Ed. He was very professional."

And he also "succeeded in taming the bulls at production," said Libby. "*Alam niya ang kiliti ng lahat nang tao doon* (He knew the quirks of everyone there). He blended well with his co-employees. He was cool and very patient. I admire his patience."

David Valdes, senior vice president for corporate services, said that when anyone needed help with anything about computers, Ed was often "the guy to call."

"Even if it was clearly not his expertise or his responsibility, he would take it upon himself to try to help out. He saw the IT group as a team and he never hesitated to help his colleagues whenever he could," Valdes said, adding:

"He was just so approachable. He was a good-natured man, and he never complained about a work assignment."

This quality of Ed is something his wife Nanette, a customer relations officer of the classified ads division, swears by.

At the Las Piñas City Medical Center where Ed was confined for at least six weeks, she said, "I knew that most of the time he was in great pain. But he seldom complained. He was holding a rosary all the time.

"Last Thursday he told me he felt very tired. He knew it was a losing battle, but he was still hoping for a miracle. He was the kind of person who doesn't give up easily."

RANDY HORMILLOSA

THE "GATEKEEPER" moves on to other gates to keep. But he leaves behind memories for wife Nanette and children, Jonathan Edmon and Ena Francesca, to keep. His body lies at the Holy Trinity Chapel in Sucat, Parañaque.

September

Ed learned he had cancer early in September last year. Six months earlier, a physician at the Perpetual Help Hospital in Las Piñas said he was "suffering from peptic ulcer."

Nanette recalled that Ed started feeling the pain in December. He weighed 160 pounds at that time, but his weight dropped to 140 early this year, she said.

He weighed only 115 pounds when he passed away.

"Ed decided early on that he would never undergo chemotherapy although he knew it might prolong his life," Nanette said. "He also said no to cobalt treatment. He relied on herbal medicines. Unfortunately, his body failed to respond to herbal medications. The cancer was already in its advanced stage."

In December, Ed started taking a 10-milligram tablet of morphine every day to kill the pain. The dosage increased to three tablets daily in February.

On Holy Thursday, "they injected morphine every four hours, to no avail," Nanette recalled.

Memories

Payroll section head Bong Rabaya and Lita Perez of the accounting department remember Ed as a "private person," but "very kind."

Rabaya and Perez were candle sponsors at the Abad-Arban wedding on Dec. 15, 1990, at the Good Shepherd Parish church in Las Piñas.

The groom evolved into a good family man.

"One look at Nanette and Ed together and you just knew they were a perfect, inseparable match," Valdes said. "Ed was a doting father, and you could tell that his kids (Jonathan Edmon, 9, and Ena Francesca, 7) were well brought up by loving parents."

Zaldy Alejandrino, supervisor of the digital processing unit, joked that Ed appeared aloof at times.

"*Pa-suplado epek iyang si* Ed. Never *bumangka sa usapan, pero masayang tao* (He never dominated a conversation, but he was actually a happy person," Alejandrino said.

Their friendship started in 1984 at the defunct Celebrity magazine, where Alejandrino was paste-up artist and Ed was part-time proofreader. The two men later joined Mr and Ms magazine and eventually the INQUIRER.

Senior deskperson Rosario Garcellano, then managing editor of Celebrity, said Ed had a "pleasant demeanor, a quiet smile."

"It was a pleasure working with him," she said, recalling that when they saw each other again at the INQUIRER, "I was glad to find that while his circumstances had changed, his nature had not."

Commerce graduate

Ed was the third of four children of Francisco and Ida Abad of Pagsanjan, Laguna. He was a graduate of the Far Eastern University, where he took up a commerce course majoring in management.

He joined the INQUIRER on April 1, 1986, as a proofreader, and became a regular employee six months later. In July 1988, he transferred to the electronic data processing division.

In September 1993, Ed was named head of the software packages and training section. In January 2000, he became point man of the editorial systems support section.

Ed went on optional retirement last Feb. 21, citing his illness.

His remains will be cremated today at the Manila Memorial Park crematorium in Parañaque after a 10 a.m. Mass at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels in Sucat.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, April 19, 2001
Octave of Easter

1st Reading:	**Acts 3:11-26**
Gospel:	**Lk 24:35-48**

The two disciples told what had happened on the road and how Jesus made himself known when he broke bread with them.

As they went on talking about this, Jesus himself stood in their midst. (And he said to them, "Peace to you.") In their panic and fright they thought they were seeing a ghost, but he said to them, "Why are you upset and why do such ideas cross your mind? Look at my hands and feet and see that it is I myself. Touch me and see for yourselves that a ghost has no flesh and bones as I have." (As he said this, he showed his hands and feet.)

In their joy they didn't dare believe and were still astonished. So he said to them, "Have you anything to eat?" and they gave him a piece of broiled fish. He took it and ate it before them.

Then Jesus said to them, "Remember the words I spoke to you when I was still with you: Everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms had to be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.

And he went on, "You see what was written: the Messiah had to suffer and on the third day rise from the dead. Then repentance and forgiveness in his name would be proclaimed to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Now you shall be witnesses to this."

Commentary:

Today's Gospel reading continues that of yesterday. The reaction of the disciples is most natural. Even up to this third millennium, people believe in ghosts. Some are amused by the thought of it. Others are terrified. The Gospel clearly brings home to us that a glorious transformation took place with Jesus' bodiliness. This will also be our lot and that of the entire creation. But it takes time to open up our minds to the reality of the Paschal mystery even today and believe it to be truly operative. Death and life are simply distinct aspects of our conditioned reality. Once we see them as merely parts of a whole, peace (shalom = wholeness) ensues. We ourselves need to see through this mystery before we can be witnesses of it to others.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS)—Homicide and murder—The presence of treachery should not result in qualifying the offense to murder, for the correct rule is that when it obtains in the special complex crime of robbery with homicide, such treachery is to be regarded as a generic aggravating circumstance, robbery with homicide being a case of a composite crime with its own definition and special penalty in the Revised Penal Code. [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Justice Quisumbing, People v. Cando, G.R. No. 128114, October 25, 2000]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

FIBL invites Jun B, Chino

IN ITS effort to join the mainstream of Philippine basketball, Commissioner Dilip Budhrani of the Filipino-Indian Basketball League (FIBL) has invited his PBA and PBL counterparts, together with other special guests, at the league's opening this Sunday.

PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino and PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad, together with Makati Mayor Elenita Binay, former MMDA Chair Jojo Binay, Indian ambassador to the Philippines Shri Satindar, Kumar Uppal and some PBA players are expected to grace the FIBL opening ceremonies set to start at 2:30 p.m. at the Makati Coliseum.

Now on its third year since its revival, the league, which has Molten as its official ball, opens with a doubleheader featuring men's defending champion Bombay Bombers against the Knights to be followed by the game between the Hoop It Up Kings and the Suns.

Iverson injured

PHILADELPHIA—Allen Iverson was placed on the injured list by the Philadelphia 76ers on Tuesday and will miss the final two games of the regular season.

Iverson, who leads the league in scoring, steals and minutes, announced Monday that he would skip the final two games so he could be healthy and rested for the playoffs. He was listed with bursitis in his right elbow.

League rules require that a player miss at least five games to be put on the injured list, but the playoffs are treated as a separate season. **AP**

SHAQ 13-FOR-13

Lakers win Pacific Division crown

LOS ANGELES—Shaquille O'Neal shot 13-for-13 from the line and finished with 33 points and 13 rebounds as the Lakers clinched the Pacific Division title after beating the Denver Nuggets, 108-91, in the NBA Tuesday night.

The defending NBA champion Lakers extended their winning streak to a season-long eight games. Los Angeles will be the No. 2 seed in the Western Conference playoffs, behind the San Antonio Spurs.

The Lakers will face slumping Portland, seeded seventh in the West, in the first round of the playoffs in a rematch of last year's conference finals.

Kobe Bryant added 26 points for Los Angeles.

Raef LaFrentz led the Nuggets with 22 points and 13 rebounds. Voshon Lenard added 20 points, and Anthony Goldwire scored a season-high 18.

Denver played without Antonio McDyess, Nick Van Exel and Kevin Willis, all sidelined with injuries.

In Miami, Alonzo Mourning dunked an inbounds pass with two-tenths of a second left, and the Miami Heat clinched the No. 3 seed in the Eastern Conference.

The game was meaningless for the Bucks, who have clinched the Central Division title and will be the No. 2 seed.

With 1.4 seconds left, Dan Majerle inbounded from midcourt to Mourning breaking to the basket. He outleaped Rafer Alston to catch the pass and slammed home a dunk over Ray Allen.

Mourning, playing his 12th game in a comeback from a kidney disease, played 33 minutes and scored 25 points, both season highs. He also had 16 rebounds.

Glenn Robinson had 22 points and Allen added 21 for the Bucks.

The victory was Miami's first in three games against Milwaukee.

In Toronto, Vince Carter hit a baseline jumper with 7.6 seconds left in overtime as Toronto kept its hopes for home-court advantage in the playoffs alive.

Carter's 8-footer gave him 21 points and gave Toronto its 27th home victory of the season, a franchise record.

Antonio Davis had 16 points and 11 rebounds for Toronto, which is in the playoffs for the second time in the franchise's six-year history.

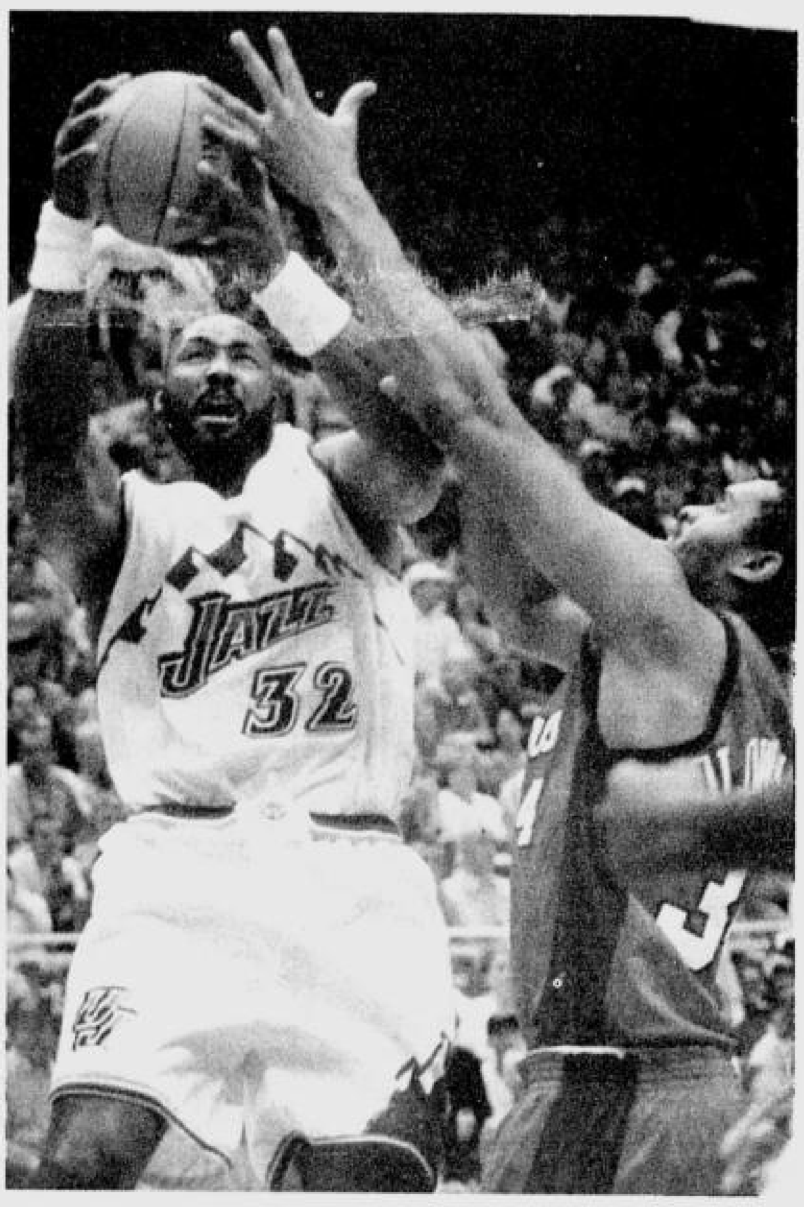
Detroit, out of the playoffs for the first time in five years, was led by Jerry Stackhouse's 22 points. Corliss Williamson scored 17 and Ben Wallace had 28 rebounds.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Ron Artest hit a go-ahead layup with 39.2 seconds left as Chicago won for just the third time in 22 games.

Rookie A.J. Guyton scored a career-high 24 points, Artest added 19 and Marcus Fizer had 17 for the Bulls.

Fred Hoiberg had 15 points and Elton Brand added 12 points and 12 rebounds as Chicago won its second straight road game, and its fourth in 40 games away from the United Center.

Complete Results: Toronto 94, Detroit 92, OT;l Miami 91, Milwaukee 89; Atlanta 122, Washington 119; Chicago 100, New Jersey 94; Philadelphia 111, Indiana 105, OT; Houston 114, Minnesota 87; Utah 97, L.A. Clippers 92; San Antonio 99, Portland 93; LA Lakers 108, Denver 91. **AP**


UTAH Jazz forward Karl Malone (left) drives hard against Los Angeles Clippers center Michael Olowokandi during their NBA game on Tuesday. The Jazz won, 97-92. REUTERS

Bata, 2 others ready for SEAG

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINES may yet reap most, if not all, of the gold medals in billiards in the Kuala Lumpur Southeast Asian Games.

This surfaced as cue masters Efren "Bata" Reyes, Leonardo "Dodong" Andam and Rodolfo "Boy" Luat made themselves available for the biennial sportsfest slated in September.

"Definitely, they are very much available as long as it is for flag and country," said Mario Roxas, spokesperson of Puyat Sports, the sports outfit handling the careers of the international pool artists.

Roxas said an invitation from the Billiards and Snookers Congress of the Philippines for them to play in KL will clinch it.

"Only an invitation is needed in order to formalize their participation in the SEA Games," said Roxas.

Last week, BSCP president Ernesto Fajardo said the door is always open for Reyes and company should they opt to don the national colors.

In Brunei two years ago, the three snared a gold medal each with Reyes scooping two golds in the individual and 15-ball rotation.

Despite a busy calendar, Roxas said the three would be available since their international commitments will come before the biennial sportsfest.

The 9-Ball World Championships in Cardiff, Wales, is scheduled for July while the US Open will be played in the first week of September.

"But just in case the US Open falls on the same week of the games, Puyat Sports will definitely prioritize the SEA Games," said Roxas.

Francisco "Django" Bustamante, another multi-awarded cue artist from Puyat Sports, however will not wear the national colors due to a prior commitment.

"Except for Django, the three others are based here in the country so we do not foresee much problem in their schedules," said Roxas.

Bustamante, a proud son of Maliwalo, Tarlac, is based in Germany.

Payla joins Lerio in semis

LA LISA, Cuba—Flyweight Violito Payla, turning out to be the biggest surprise package of Team Caltex Philippines here, breezed past Cuban Yumarqui Aguilar, 4-1, in their semifinal match Monday to join lightfly Danilo Lerio in the finals of the seventh Balado Cup boxing tournament at the La Verada Plaza.

The 22-year-old Armyman from Cagayan de Oro, who won the bronze medal in the Cordova Cardin slugfest last week in Havana, proved to be a tough nut to crack for his taller Cuban opponent.

A lefty, Paylay used his dreaded combinations to win the bout and earn a shot at the gold in only his first international stint.

Payla's victory made up for the 1-4 defeat of ligthwelter Romeo Brin to Cuba's Wisney Aldazabl Monday. But more importantly, it gave Team Caltex, also supported by the Philippine Sports Commission, Pacific Heights and Adidas, two shots at the gold in the event where he won a silver and two bronze medals last year.

Lerio, a 20-year-old Navyman and veteran of last year's Sydney Olympics, made it to the finals of the 48 kg class by beating Cuba's Barbaro Gonzalez, 4-1, last Sunday. In the finals, Lerio trades punches with another Cuban in 1999 World Youth champion Andy Lafita, a 3-2 winner over compatriot Ivan Perez in the semis.

LIM

200 achievers join PSC's youth camp

LAOAG CITY—The Philippine Sports Commission Third Summer Youth Training Camp opened yesterday with some 200 young athletic achievers, medalists of the Batang Pinoy and Palarong Pambansa, in colorful rites at the Marcos Stadium here.

"I urge all of you to take into your heart and mind your participation in this camp. Learn and absorb as much knowledge as you can for it will surely propel you to your future success," said PSC chair Carlos D. Tuason.

Commissioner Amparo "Weena" Lim, project director, said the training camp is part of the government's commitment in nurturing grassroots sports and in line with the PSC's role of developing new blood who will emerge as the next generation of sports heroes.

"The camp will help you improve in your chosen sport and teach you the values of teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline. Values that will help you not only if you pursue a career in sports, but also in your roles within your families, in your schools and communities as well," Lim said.

Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand "Bong Bong" Marcos Jr. was the guest of honor during the opening rites also graced by Vice Gov. Mariano Nalupta Jr., Laoag City Mayor Roger Fariñas and Congressman Roquito Ablan.

PSC Commissioners Ricardo R. Garcia and Cynthia N. Carrion also attended the occasion in support of the project.

The annual camp, supported by Unilever Philippines and Coca Cola Bottlers Inc., aims to train young sports achievers about the rudiments of sports management and leadership while monitoring their behavioral patterns and social development.

At the end of the 22-day training camp, participants should be able to absorb the values of sportsmanship, fair play, diligence, competitivenes, discipline and hard work that will put them in good stead even outside the sporting arena.

Participants will also be treated with fun games and educational tours around Ilocos Norte.

SPORTSWATCH

Intervillage lures 11 teams

ACTION in the Alaxan Intervillage golf series resumes today with the staging of the East tournament for villages in San Juan, Mandaluyong, Pasig and Marikina. Eleven teams are vying for top honors in the first phase of their 36-hole elims at Wack Wack's east course. The Monte Vista squad of skipper Homer Ortega, which stunned the fancied teams to rule last year's grand finals in Canlubang, is out to duplicate its feat although against Greenhills 1 and 2 and the teams from Valle Verde. The popular golf series among the exclusive residential villages in the metropolis kicked off its 10th season two weeks ago with White Plains drawing first blood by topping the first 18 holes of the north elims, also at Wack Wack.

Guba defeats Manalastas

TOP seed Johan Guba and fourth pick Carlo Manalastas downed separate rivals yesterday to arrange a boys' 18-under semifinal showdown in the Tru-flex National Age Group Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Guba defeated Patrick John Tierro, 1-6, 6-2, 6-3, while Manalastas beat Christian Cuarto, 6-3, 6-0. In the boys' 16-under division, seventh seed Janjie Soquino stunned No. 4 Vyaki Sabandon, 6-2, 6-2, to advance in the semifinals against No. 8 Julianito Jopia.

Buencamino, Joson fishing champs

PHILIPPINE Game Fishing Foundation president Rey Buencamino ruled the 18-angler field as Jojo Joson of Esquire Industrial Sales and Jimmy Flores of Sigcomm won as champion boat buddies of the recent heavy tackle four-day AAD sportfishing tournament at San Vicente in Sta. Ana, Cagayan. Joson and Flores scored 133.3 kg and 129.1 kg, respectively, for second and third place behind Buencamino's 186.6 kg tally. The Joson-Flores pair logged 262.2 kg from a black marlin, 4 sailfish and 11 other fish against the Buencamino-Benedict Lim duo's 257.3 kg from 22 fish. Capt Ben Solis and Edwin Fernandez trailed as third place team with 188.3 kg.

Scooter race at Alabang's Filinvest

SC Kymco Pilipinas, the local manufacturer of Taiwan-made Kymco scooters and motorcycles, will stage the second Kymco Cup scooter race at the Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang on Sunday, April 22. According to Gilbert Limjoco, Kymco VP for Operations, the four-class scooter street race, dubbed "2nd Kymco Cup-Racing at the Filinvest Corporate City," is expected to attract more than 60 participants. Scooter racing aficionados are looking forward to a "hot and wild" encounter in the premier open expert class among the country's top riders bannered by multi-titled and last year's champion Jolet Jao of Marikina, brothers Jaime and Mark Anthony, Carlo Yalo and brothers B.J. and Benjo Mendoza. Call 822-10-52 for more details.

Mandaluyong hosts Eagle derby

MANDALUYONG Coliseum's "10th Ucap/ San Pedro GP Eagle 6-Cock Derby" championship round starts at 5 p.m. today with more than 65 fights lined up. Sagupaan Super Feeds and Lakpue Drug Inc. are the sponsors. Eleven entries, from a field of 47, have two points each going into today's finale: Starwars Sagupaan (Patrick Antonio and Tony Litonjua), Sagupaan Winning Linc (P. Antonio), CPB PBRL (Mayor Claudy Bautista), Binangonan (Gov. Ito Ynares), NJ Mataas na Kahoy (Butch Macasaet), Sir Vincent (Vic Yu), Paniqui (Bebot Uy), Alfie ESJ (Muroy Dolorico), EGT Stingers (Esting Teopaco), Arnis Mster II (Raymond Velayo and Boy Diaz) and Guts and Glory (Wakee Salud). Derby hosts are Pampanga's Jet Fernando, Ramon Mencenares and Ting Ariosa. Mandaluyong Coliseum also presents the "Kalayaan 7-Cock Derby" on June 12, 14, 16, 19, 21, 23 and 26.

Petron GP resumes April 22

AFTER the Holy Week break, the country's top competition drivers return to action for the third and fourth rounds of the 2001 Petron Grand Prix on April 22 at the Subic International Raceway.

Kookie Ramirez of Petron-SRA and Ferdie Ong of Rota-Speedwelle-Outlast Battery seek a repeat of their smashing triumphs in the Blaze super saloon race in this annual series organized by Sports Values Inc. and sponsored by Petron Corp.

Ramirez topped the season-opening race over Nilo Pazcoguin of Tom's-Auto Trend and Mike Aguilar of Caltex, while Ong dominated the second race over Pazcoguin and Jody Coseteng of Toyota-Team Tom's.

Aguilar and Pazcoguin will also gun for their second victories in the super saloon B category, while Ricardo Loi of La Opera-GNC-Agip and Dominique Bon of SRA will seek another win in the super saloon C class.

For inquiries, call Estela Casibang at the SVI secretariat in Pasig City at tel. 671-6926.

NGAP tourney elims on at Wack Wack

THE NATIONWIDE eliminations of the National Age Group Championships resume today with the holding of the Metro Manila Leg at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club. Tee off time is 11 a.m.

At least 60 of the national capital region's top jungolfers are expected to join the competition in five different age groups—15-17, 13-14, 11-12, 10-and-below.

The top finishers at Wack Wack will join qualifiers from Visayas held at the Cebu Country Club, Luzon played at Mimosa and Mindanao staged at Rancho Palos Verdes.

The NGAP is staging the events as a nationwide talent search for its rejuvenated jungolf program.

The series will be capped by the national finals at the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Cavite where the top two qualifiers from each division during the eliminations will vie for the top awards.

Valley golf to honor Don Celso

VALLEY Golf Club members and invited guests pay homage to club founder Don Celso S. Tuason with the second Memorial Cup set on Saturday and Sunday.

Club president Mario Ongkiko leads the roster of 300 players spread out into 150 member-guest teams contending in a mixed format of handicap stroke play and scramble in both the South championship and Executive courses.

Golfing family members of the late pioneer-organizer of Philippine golf during its formative years are expected to join the two-day spectacular, said tournament director Mackoy Quiogue.

Director Bobot Marquez of the club sports and games committee, director Ross Sibal and club general manager Mariano "Jun" Canilao complete the organizing body for the 2nd Don Celso S. Tuason Memorial Cup.

The major sponsors are Nissan Motor Philippines, Equitable PCI Bank, DHL Philippines, Citra Skyway, ABS-CBN, Studio 23, Phil Axa Insurance and United Polyresins. Minor sponsors are Manila Bank, Baluyot Caskets, Armscor and Adtel Inc.

RACING TIPS

AT STA ANA By Mr. 999

Race 1—1. Galvalume 2. Nuts Again 3. Mighty Dragon

Race 2—1. Typhoon Belle 2. Mark's Treasure 3. High Pitch

Race 3—1. Tumataginting 2. Pride of Mandaue 3. Sand Splash 4. Repertoire 5. Green Buck

Race 4—1. Filthy Rich 2. Zenie's Pride 3. Modulo Queen 4. Dial Tone

Race 5—1. Native Talent 2. Golden State 3. Exceptional Charm 4. Scholar Tem 5. Accommodating

Race 6—1. Sis Boom Bah 2. Sham Sham 3. Roman Queen 4. Guts Pleaser/ El Bulldog 5. Tellmetonight

Race 7—1. Make Your Mark 2. Majestic Ruler 3. Grace and Fortune 4. Cycloneferros 5. Boomerang

Race 8—1. Heavy Metal 2. Pro Bono 3. Boy from Brazil/Privately Owned 4. Knows Love

Life's a game

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

SOME people who love to hate me peddle the myth that I sometimes write non-sports pieces.

For the record, almost everything that I write here is about sports. That has always been my belief. Eggie Apostol, this paper's first chairman who now owns the exciting Pinoy Times, bought that belief when she got me aboard in 1986. If some readers (detractors?) disagree, I'm sorry.

As I keep saying, sports is life and life is sports. Everything that we do, think, has something to do with sports.

I write about food because, to state the obvious, athletes, like you and me, also eat.

Robert Jaworski's favorite dish is grilled Bonuan milkfish (*bangus*), the pride of Mayor Al Fernandez's turf, Dagupan City. (By the way, nice to hear that my Buloy Al is out of the hospital and raring to rejoin the political combat in Dagupan, the city that nearly has 20 banks—making it the most prosperous city up North.)

I write about drinks because athletes, contrary to popular belief, also drink.

While Philip Cezar's favorite is San Miguel Beer, Atoy Co's "five-thirsty" drink is cognac. When Crispa's Billy Ray Bates was flying high as the PBA's Black Superman in the '80s, his fuel was San Miguel Beer. One case of SMB, he could down in an hour or so.

I write about music because again, like you and me, athletes have their own favorite singers, if not bands or orchestras.

Alvin Patrimonio likes blues and jazz like Edu Manzano (a dedicated baseball official if you still don't know). The late Arnie Tuadles, whom I had the chance to play golf with several times after he retired from basketball, loved the Beatles.

Luisito Espinosa couldn't enter the ring without the ditty "Eye of the Tiger" being played full blast so that his manager, Hermie Rivera, made the song part of the fight contract each time Louie defended his world boxing crown from the late '80s to the early '90s.

I write about bars and restaurants because again, like you and me, athletes do unwind, too.

When he is in Manila from his perch in Baguio, Grandmaster Eugene Torre downs a double of brandy or whisky at Grandmaster's Café along Timog Avenue in Quezon City before he hits the sack. He has fallen in love with the band that plays there, The Concordes, whose specialties are standards from the '50s to the '70s.

But Joey Antonio, Torre's fellow GM, goes to Emmanuel Café along Kalayaan Street, also in QC, in the company of Quezon City prosecutors, many of whom dig the Beatles. They enjoy listening to the joint's Emmanuel Band headed by Bun Yao, whose rendition of Peter and Gordon's version of "True Love Ways" in a duet with Ed Manaloto is just simply superb; they play there Friday nights.

Lastly, I also write about politics because some athletes also transform into politicians.

Basketball Olympian Freddie Webb used to be a senator; Jaworski has taken his place in 1998. Former national cager Joey Marquez is mayor of Parañaque. Is Vic "The Enforcer" Sanchez still the vice mayor of a Laguna town? Hey, Lydia de Vega, who lost a son in a road accident only a while back, is running for councilor in her native Meycauayan, Bulacan. And was I told Sonny Cabatu is running for councilor in Quezon City? And, yes, the late Olympic cager, Ambrosio Padilla, became one of the most distinguished senators when the Senate was still the Senate.

So think again, fellas. Nothing in life isn't sports. You win some, you lose some.

You pinch for a drinker's dish—*pulutan*—for the taste of it.

You take a swig at a drinker's brew, mix, in the spirit of human existence; camaraderie they call it.

You sometimes poke fun at politicians —but, fellas, they also form part of life's daily menu; some are bland, yes, but others are palatable.

You sing, either while taking a shower or driving your car, it doesn't matter.

Choice is what makes life. And because life is sports, life's but a game. A loss can be laughed at. Quit being a KJ. But take heed: Linking up with cheats is downright suicide. That's kind of like drowning in your own bathtub.

Isport lang, brod.

BASEBALL RESULTS

NATIONAL LEAGUE—Philadelphia 6, Chicago Cubs 3; Cincinnati 3, Milwaukee 2; N.Y. Mets 4, Montreal 0; Florida 3, Atlanta 2; Arizona 17, St. Louis 4; Colorado 9, San Diego 5; San Francisco 3, Los Angeles 2; Houston at Pittsburgh, ppd.

AMERICAN LEAGUE—Toronto 6, N.Y. Yankees 5; Cleveland 8, Baltimore 1; Detroit 7, Chicago White Sox 4; Boston 10, Tampa Bay 0; Minnesota 6, Kansas City 5; Seattle 6, Texas 4; Oakland 5, Anaheim 1.

AP

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▣ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

BASKETBALL: NBA – Miami Heat vs Orlando Magic at 5:30 p.m. on IBC 13.

TENNIS: Masters Series (Monaco), Early Round Coverage Day #2 at 2 p.m. (r), Day #3 tomorrow at 12:30 a.m. on ESPN

WTA Ericsson Open, Quarterfinals and Semifinals at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

GOLF: PGA Worldcom Classic - The Heritage of Golf, Final Round at 8 a.m. (r), Highlights at 11:30 p.m. on Star Sports

BASEBALL: Wednesday Night Baseball at 10 a.m. on ESPN

Thunder, Aces force KO games

GAMES TOMORROW
(Philsports)
5:15 p.m. – Shell vs Mobiline
7:30 p.m. – Purefoods vs Ginebra

BATANG Red Bull pounced on San Miguel Beer's sloppy endgame to prevail, 85-73, last night and force a rubber match for a PBA All-Filipino Cup semifinals slot at the Araneta Coliseum.

Though facing a badly depleted SMB side, Red Bull got a handful of woes themselves, dealing with an error-prone game and failing to dictate the game's tempo.

"We're just plain lucky tonight," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao. "We committed 16 turnovers in the first half alone and the game didn't go according to plan."

Instead, the Beermen dragged the game slowly and concentrated on half-game to neutralize the Thunder's edge in speed and cohesion.

"Also, they (Beermen) don't have their key players," added Guiao.

San Miguel missed Boybits Victoria, Dwight Lago and failed to field in newly acquired Fil-American Dorian Peña due to an injured left shin.

And though the Beermen suited up rejuvenated Danny Seigle, it even proved disastrous especially down the stretch when the Fil-Am took matters into his own hands.

Seigle was 4-of-15 from the field with most of the futile attempts coming late in the game when the Beermen had a chance to turn things around.

But with him missing left and right, Red Bull's Devonn Harp, comebacking Jimwell Torion and Lowell Briones busied themselves connecting at the other end to ice the game.

In fact, Red Bull's fortunes was typified by two buzzer-beating shots Briones and Ato Agustin made, ending the second and third quarters.

Alaska Milk defeated Pop Cola, 78-71, in the second game as the Aces also forced a playoff for a semis seat against the Panthers.

FIRST GAME

RED BULL 85 – Raymundo 15, Harp 14, Valenzuela 13, Agustin 11, Torion 8, Briones 8, Mendoza 8, Reyes 4, Pennisi 2, Miller 2, Solis 0.

SMB 73 – Ildefonso 23, Belasco 18, Seigle 15, Racela 10, Mustre 4, Gamboa 3, Mente 0, Abuda 0, Duat 0.

Quarters: 17-15, 32-32, 59-51, 85-73.

PBA Timeout at malls

THE PBA and its merchandising arm, PBA Properties, have lined up activities for the months of April, May and June during its "PBA Timeout at SM Supermalls."

Basketball enthusiasts are all invited to join the activities which will be held at various SM Supermalls, starting at the Megamall for the launching of the event on April 26.

HARP

FILE PHOTO

Ana aims to keep 2nd spot

BY DENNIS EROA

STANDINGS	W	L
Shark	5	0
Ana	3	1
Giv	2	1
PharmaQuick	2	2
Montaña	2	2
Ateneo-Pioneer	1	2
Hapee	1	3
Welcoat	1	3
Osaka	0	3

GAMES TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
3:30 p.m.—Giv Beauty Soap vs Welcoat
5:30 p.m.-PharmaQuick vs Ana Freezer

SURPRISING Ana Freezer eyes to cement its hold of solo second spot when it battles rejuvenated PharmaQuick today in the PBL Chairman's Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Hardly given prominence at the start of the conference, the Freezer Kings are getting the respect of their peers with their go-go brand of basketball.

"We win as a team, we lose as a team," coach Rudy Mendoza said yesterday."I don't care whether we lose as long as we give it our best shot."

Ana (3-1) tackles PharmaQuick (2-2) at 5:30 p.m. Like Ana, PharmaQuick, bannered by MBA stars Bruce Dacia and Omanzie Rodriguez, won its last two games.

Ronald Tuhid, Rey Mendez, Dondon Mendoza, Paul Artadi, Leo Vilar, Roland Pascual and Ariel de Castro will banner Ana.

The presence of the 6-foot-6 Rodriguez gives PharmaQuick the edge in the middle, though Ana's biggest headache is to put the cuffs on the acrobatic Dacia.

Ana's running game is deadly but needs to check its tendency to commit errors in the homestretch.

The bench of PharmaQuick is deep with the presence of Erwin Velez, Jun Canoneo, Jan Alfad and Jay Lapinid.

GIV Beauty Soap meets Welcoat in the curtain-raiser at 3:30 p.m. Welcoat, the defending champion, is trying to break out of a slump.

Coach Junel Baculi's shaky relationship with his players has come into focus following Welcoat's string of losses. Baculi, who steered the Paintmasters to three titles, blamed and even challenged some of his players to a fistfight after they lost to PharmaQuick last week.

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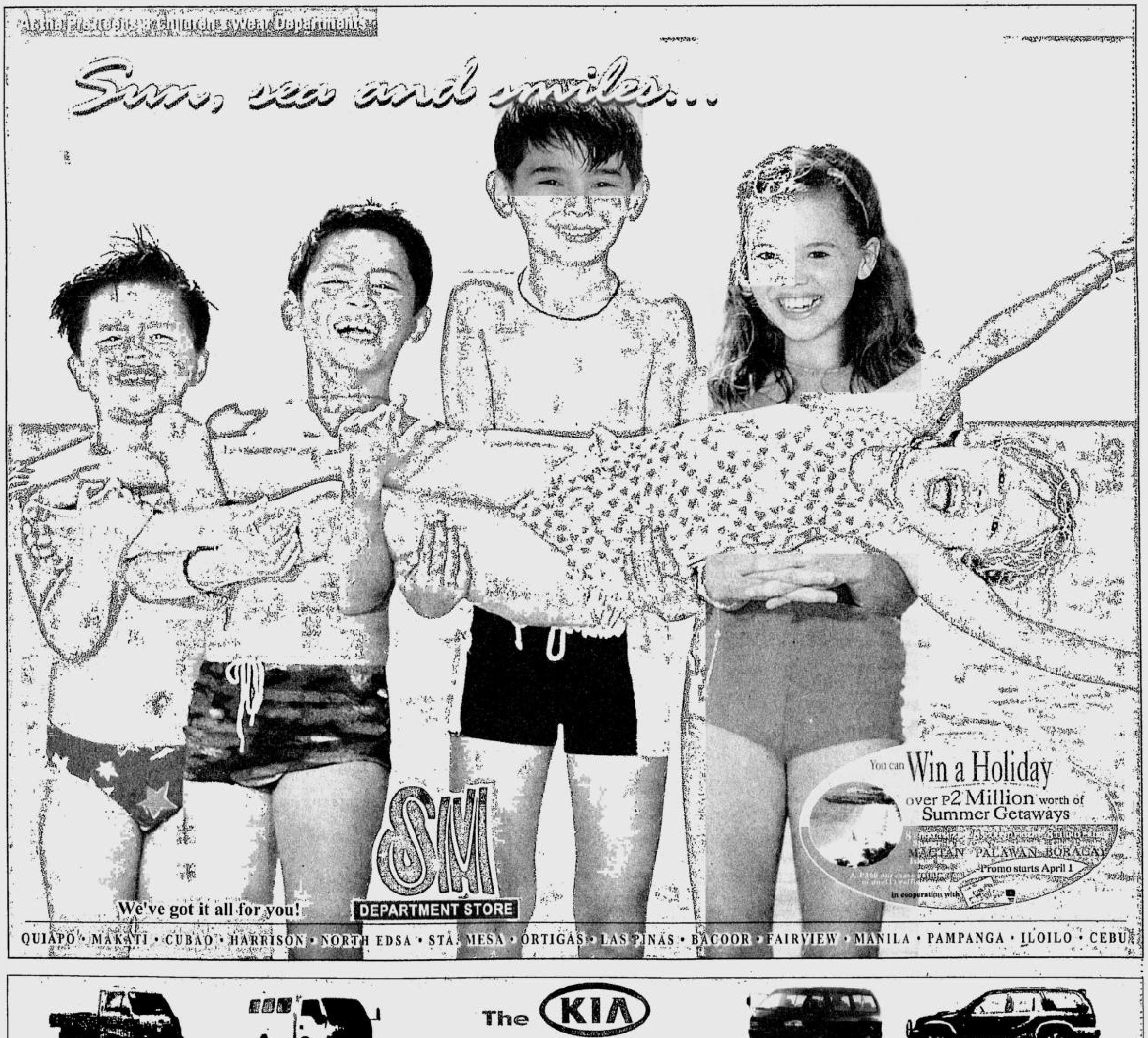

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■ Edsa: Historian who became part of history A22

DE LOS SANTOS

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

3 slain by mistake

KENNY AZANA

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

THE GORY slays were neither drug-related nor caused by serious fraternity rifts.

Police yesterday said the three youths whose bodies were found headless in Quezon City were most likely slain mistakenly.

Investigators have been zeroing in on the possibility that the three decapitated youths found in Barangay Culiat, Quezon City on Monday were "mistakenly killed" by a crime syndicate.

Senior Insp. Rudy Jaraza, chief of the Central Police District-Criminal Investigation Unit homicide section, said at least one of the victims could have been mistakenly identified by the suspects as their target.

The two others, he said, were also killed as they were with the first victim when he was abducted.

Jaraza said police have already identified the suspects and their whereabouts after questioning several witnesses.

Jaraza however refused to divulge the motive of the syndicate.

He said he was not giving further information to avoid preempting police operation.

CPD operatives would be able to arrest the suspects today, he said.

Eleanor Azana, mother of Kenny Azana, the 16-year-old victim, said a number of Culiat students had given his son menacing stares while he was in a computer store on the night of his graduation.

Jaraza said Culiat students could not have had sufficient reason to kill the victims and even cut their heads off. The heads are still missing.

Two of the victims remain unidentified.

One of them was described as 18 to 20 years old, 5-foot-3, with a tattoo on his right body.

The other was probably aged 12, 5-foot-5, and slim built.

The headless bodies of Kenny Azana and the two other victims were found by a motorist on Mindanao Avenue near the entrance of Cresta Verde Subdivision in Quezon City on Monday night.

They bore ligature marks near their collarbones.

Azana was identified by his mother on Tuesday morning through birthmarks and his black underwear.

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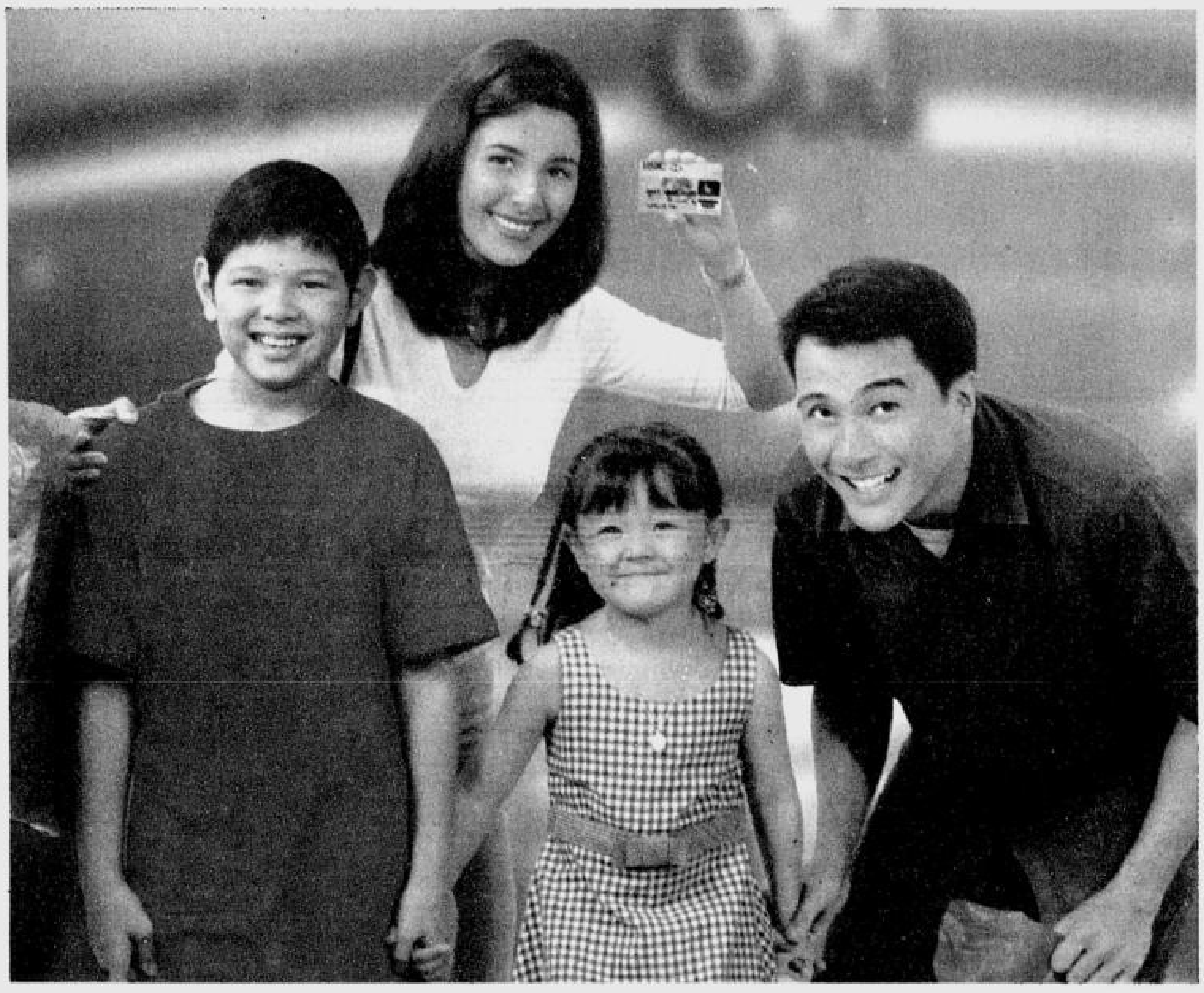

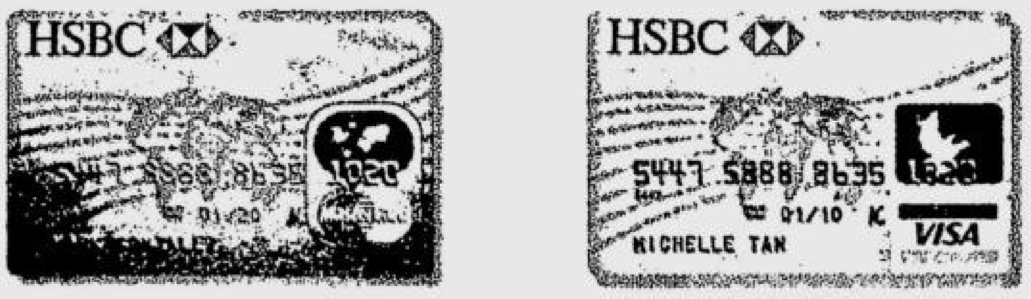

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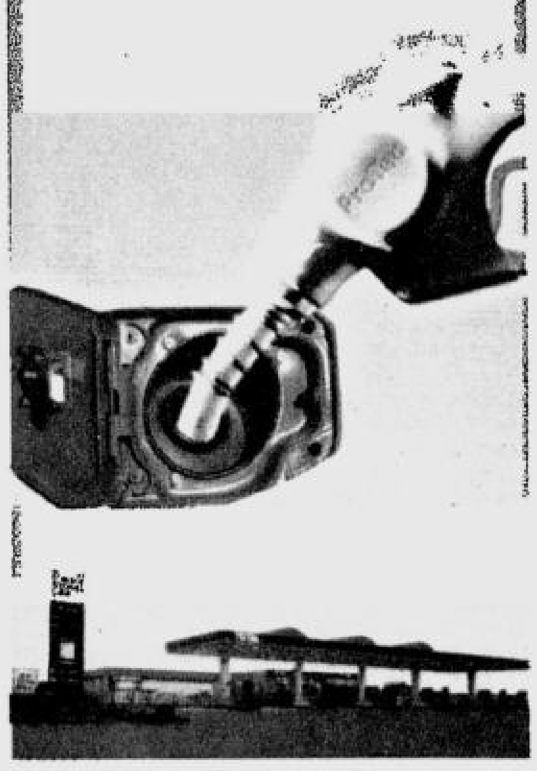

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EPIFANIO DE LOS SANTOS

The historian who became part of history

By Boots Anson-Roa

"WHAT'S in a name," asked Shakespeare in "Romeo and Juliet."

Not really much, unless you are a Filipino who has personally or vicariously experienced two Edsa People Power Revolutions (1986 and 2001) and have been mesmerized, democratized, politicized, and empowered in the process.

To you, and to many enlightened citizens of the world as well, Edsa has become a symbol. Edsa evokes myriad sentiments, depending on which side of the political fence you are in.

Edsa, or at least where the road intersects with White Plains and Ortigas Avenue, has become hallowed ground, where democracy was reborn in 1986, and where people power was rekindled last January. Recent media accounts have traced the new Edsa miracle to a manifestation or "epiphany of the saints," which when translated into Spanish is Epifanio de los Santos.

Will the real man behind Edsa please rise? Will he show why the 54-kilometer stretch from Caloocan to Parañaque should resonate with his memory? Will he justify a 1959 act of Congress that changed the name of Highway 54 to Epifanio de los Santos Avenue?

Who was Edsa?

Who was Epifanio de los Santos y Cristobal? This writer respects his memory dearly as the half-brother and alter ego of my maternal grandfather, Pantaleon Cristobal. I understand from my mother and my aunts that the brothers were veritable soul mates, in interests, talents and looks.

Historians Gregorio Zaide, Librado D. Cayco, Teodoro Agoncillo and even American critics Austin Craig and A.V. Hartendorp referred to Don Panyong, as De los Santos was fondly called, as "scholar, art critic, biographer, historian, essayist, linguist, poet, musician, composer, bibliophile," and owner of 20,000 sets (not merely volumes) of Filipiniana books and objets d'art like paintings and sculptures.

Born on April 7, 1871 to *hacendero* Escolastico de los Santos of Nueva Ecija and harpist Antonina Cristobal of Malabon, *Lolo* Panyong was privately tutored in his childhood and sent to Ateneo for high school and his Bachiller de Artes which he finished with top honors. He pursued his law studies at the University of Santo Tomas where he graduated valedictorian of his class.

He traveled extensively around the world during which he pursued studies in history, literature, art, music, and languages like Spanish, French, Latin, German and Greek.

As young writer and scholar, he bested Jose Rizal, Marcelo H. del Pilar and Graciano Lopez Jaena when he was invited to be the first Filipino member of the distinguished Royal Academy of Madrid.

His greatest contribution to the Philippine Revolution was his editorship of the short-lived periodical, La Libertad. He later co-edited La Independencia with Gen. Antonio Luna under the pseudonym G. Solon. He contributed to other newspapers like La Patria, El Renacimiento, La Democracia and others.

Public posts

Don Panyong led a literary clique that met regularly to hone their writing in his *entresuelo* in Intramuros. Among its members were Cecilio Apostol, Fernando Ma. Guerrero, Jose and Rafael Palma, Jaime C. de Veyra and Macario Adriatico.

In 1899, Don Panyong married Ursula Paez, with whom he had four children: Jose, himself a distinguished writer and researcher; Teresing Pangan, the mother of Education Undersecretary Ernesto Pangan; Escolastico, the father of Malacañang Press Assistant Secretary Ching de los Santos Suva who has served five presidents from Diosdado Macapagal to his daughter, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Don Panyong's other children included Rosario and Antonio, now dead.

Don Panyong served in San Isidro, Nueva Ecija as district attorney and provincial secretary and was subsequently elected as provincial governor for two terms, despite his aversion to politics.

In 1908, then a widower, he remarried the beautiful 16-year-old Marganta Torralba of Malolos. She bore him eight children: Leticia, herself a noted pianist; Fernando, Baby, Federico, and Socrates, who was a leading Pentagon aeronautics engineer prior to his death in Maryland. The remaining three daughters are the only living children of Don Panyong: Gertie Paez, 85, Patty and Neny, now in their 70s.

Big house

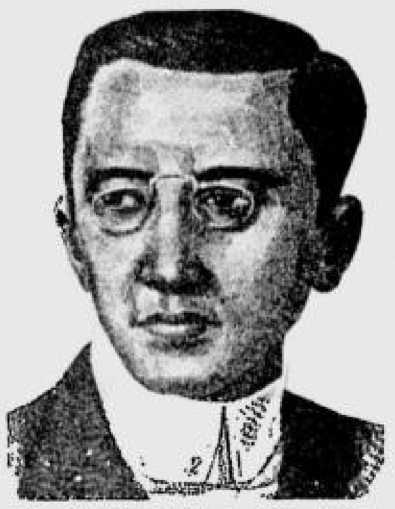
The last and most significant position Don Panyong held was as director of the Philippine National Museum and Library, as appointed by Gov. Gen. Wood in 1925.

As a noted antiquarian and bibliophile, Don Panyong had a personal collection of furniture and art works, including 200 original paintings by Fabian de la Rosa, Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo, Juan Luna, and Fernando and Pablo Amorsolo and sculpture pieces by Guillermo Tolentino.

The rest of his personal collection, kept in the huge ancestral home in Nueva Ecija, was destroyed when the Hukbalahap burned their home in 1948. Ching Suva recounts that the house was so big that as a child, she would bike around in its sala.

Tributes

When Don Panyong died in office of a stroke on April 18, 1928, the government paid him tribute through a stately funeral where pallbearers accompanied the cortege from Funeraria Nacional in Avenida Rizal to the Cementerio del Norte in the La Loma area. It must have been a sight to behold the likes of Claro M. Recto, Manuel Roxas, Juan Sumulong, Camilo Osias, Jose P. Laurel, Leon Guinto, Rafael Palma, Dr. Jose Albert, Cecilio Apostol, Isabelo de los Reyes, Antonio de las Alas and so many other notable statesmen taking turns at every street corner to pay tribute to their esteemed colleague.



EPIFANIO DE LOS SANTOS

Historian Teodoro Aconcillo looked to Don Panyong as one who "wrote history as if he were writing a literary masterpiece, in keeping with his belief that history is a part of Humanities and not of the Social Sciences." Supreme Court Justice Felix Bautista Angelo called him "the greatest historian that our country has ever produced."

De los Santos was also a musician and expert pianist and guitarist. Music critic Charles Griffith paid him the highest tribute by likening his guitar playing to that of the great Segovia of Spain.

Cecilio Apostol referred to him as "the supreme authority in arts and letters of the Philippines."

True cosmopolite

My mother, his niece, the former Belen Cristobal (+1991), was very close to Don Panyong and his son Socrates. She looked more like Lolo Panyong than my own grandfather, Lolo Panta.

In her lifetime, my mother used to recount Lolo Panyong's vast influence on her at the piano and as a writer. My mother was a chemistry scholar herself who also dabbled in music, dance and writing. She distinguished herself as an officer of the College Editors' Guild and as a chemistry board topnotcher.

Don Epifanio de los Santos y Cristobal wrote of his faith in the Filipino people: "We Filipinos are the most promising people in the world. We have unheard-of possibilities. There never has been a people similarly situated. Here we are in the Orient, with our Oriental thoughts and sentiments, but living amid a civilization more Western than was ever known in the East. The Philippines is the only country where the East meets West. The Filipino is a true cosmopolite. From him the world may expect something new and distinctive."

The author wishes to thank Asst. Secretary Ching S. Suva, the De los Santos sisters, and the UP Library for reference materials on the hero.

ON THE ROAD to history, Don Panyong left children and grandchildren, including (front row, from left) Epifanio III, Anthony Guevarra, Juliet San Lorenzo and Corazon de Ansen, (back row) Tina de los Santos, Romy de los Santos, Angelita Santos, Yolanda Cuartero, Patty de los Santos, Guerty Paez, Neny de los Santos, Ching de los Santos Suva and Maritess Pangan.

Dacer murder: All roads lead to Lacson

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

EXCEPT for the mastermind, practically all the suspects in the abduction and murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Manuel Corbito, have been arrested.

The big question: Who was the mastermind?

All roads lead to former Philippine National Police Chief Panfilo Lacson. Lacson was also chief of the just abolished Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) to which the suspects belonged.

***

All the suspects are now in the custody of the National Bureau of Investigation. They are SPO4 Marino G. Soberano, a member of PAOCTF-Cebu City; SPO3 Mauro Torres; SPO3 Jose Escalante; Crisostomo M. Purificacion; Digo de Pedro, Renato Malabanan, William Lope, Jovencio Malabanan, Margarito Cueno, who were all civilian agents of PAOCTF-Cebu. Alex Diloy and Jimmy Lopez, who saw how Dacer and Cordito died, were not PAOCTF agents but helped in disposing of the remains of the victims.

What do all the suspects have in common? They are all from Cavite. Lacson is from Cavite.

***

Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña, former chief of PAOCTF-Cebu, who allegedly gave the go-signal to "waste" Dacer and Corbito, is also from Cavite.

Apparently, it was Viña who recruited all the alleged participants in the abduction-murder of Dacer and Corbito. It is obvious that he was Lacson's trusted officer.

Viña held a position very near to Lacson's heart—as chief of PAOCTF-Cebu. Lacson was once the chief of the Metropolitan District Command in Cebu City where he made a name for himself. Lacson is very popular among the Cebuanos because he solved several big kidnapping cases where the victims were rescued.

***

Another top-ranking PAOCTF officer being implicated is Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, Lacson's fair-haired boy. A member of Philippine Military Academy Class of 1988, Aquino is the youngest ever police senior superintendent (equivalent rank in the Army: colonel). All of Aquino's PMA classmates are still police chief inspectors, two ranks below him. Aquino owes his rank to Lacson who recommended his promotion to President Estrada.

Aquino, PAOCTF's operations chief, was the elite unit's No. 2 man. His alleged participation in the Dacer-Corbito abduction-murder was in recruiting Supt. Glenn Dumlao, his most trusted man. Dumlao allegedly planned Dacer's abduction.

***

Dacer's abduction was planned and executed well: from casing the victim's house in Parañaque, his abduction on Nov. 24, 2000 at the corner of Zobel Roxas Street and Sergio Osmena Avenue in Manila, and his strangulation together with his driver in Indang, Cavite.

The participants were divided into several groups. One group took care of studying Dacer's movements. Another group carried out the abduction, and still another disposed of the victims.

But what went wrong? Why was the dastardly crime, well planned and carried out as it was, exposed?

***

Because, as Lacson told this writer when he was still a young first lieutenant at the defunct Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group (MISG), "there is no such thing as a perfect crime."

"Mon, even the most thought out and well carried out crime will be exposed," he said, "because somehow, one of the participants will squeal." Or words to that effect.

Lacson's theory now applies to him.

***

Now, we know the reason why Lacson was a rabid anti-gun advocate. During his watch as PNP chief, Lacson didn't want civilian licensed gun holders to carry guns outside their homes. Even if such civilians gave valid reasons, like their lives were being threatened.

He only issued permits to carry firearms to his close friends and those who were friends and relatives of President Estrada.

Why was Lacson a rabid anti-gun advocate? Because an armed citizenry might fight back an oppressive police force like the PAOCTF.

Had Dacer been armed, his abductors would have had second thoughts. It was easy for them to abduct Dacer because he was unarmed.

As one pro-gun poster says: Avoid being a crime victim. Shoot back.

***

Now, who will protect the citizenry from criminals?

PAOCTF was a super police unit assigned to go after kidnappers, drug dealers, murderers, car thieves and those engaged in other heinous crimes. But PAOCTF itself, as reports about the unit are now coming out, was itself a crime syndicate.

Who can the citizens trust now?

***

Lacson, who's running for senator, questioned the designation of Senior Supt. Reynaldo Berroya as PNP intelligence chief.

He said Berroya was convicted of kidnapping for ransom.

But Lacson deliberately omitted the fact that Berroya was acquitted by the Supreme Court.

Lacson should answer charges that he and his men engaged in kidnapping for ransom and drug trafficking and the abduction-murder of Salvador "Bubby" Dacer.

***

Lacson's predecessor at the PNP, retired Director General Roberto "Bobby" Lastimoso, has been vindicated.

Lacson accused Lastimoso of coddling a drug lord from Cebu City, a charge which caused Lastimoso's relief as PNP chief. Lastimoso didn't know that the guy who befriended him was involved in drugs. He is a friendly man. It was only later he came to know about the guy's alleged illegal activities.

But Lacson's reason for exposing Lastimoso's friendship with the alleged drug lord was less than ideal. He wanted to hasten his appointment as PNP chief.

It now turns out that Lastimoso's friend was a rival in the trade of Lacson's henchmen.

By the way, Lastimoso is running for congressman under the party list of Pusyon Bisaya.

Let liars quit race, says Lim

By Jerome Aning

"Let him who is proven to be lying immediately quit the race."

This was the bold challenge made yesterday by Manila mayoral candidate Alfredo Lim in rebuttal of the accusations of corruption he earlier hurled against incumbent and reelectionist Mayor Lito Atienza, as the war of words continue to heat up between the two rivals.

"All of us candidates must face the voters honestly," Lim said during the weekly media forum at the Manila Hotel. "Candidates are obliged to be truthful to voters since we have a saying that the liar is the brother of the thief."

Lim said he would withdraw from the race voluntarily should Atienza prove that he (Lim) lied in coming up with accusations against his arch-rival. But Lim demanded that Atienza should pledge to do the same.

The Lim camp has intensified its campaign for the mayor's seat. Recently, it came up with stickers that said, "Alisin na ang sinungaling sa MayniLA," spoofing Atienza's slogan, "MayniLA 2001." The "LA" stands for Lito Atienza.

During the forum, Lim renewed attacks against his rival, this time accusing him of not only misusing but failing to fully account for the P200 million trust fund the city received from the Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp. when Atienza was still the vice mayor.

The fund, Lim explained, should have been deposited to the city treasury. But the then treasurer, Anthony Acevedo, according to Lim, claimed Atienza did not remit a single centavo.

Lim said the funds can only be used for projects such as roads and the building of schools, and backed by pertinent financial documents. Atienza said he used part of the fund to beautify the Plaza Miranda in front of the Quiapo Church.

METRO CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Mandaluyong bet to Comelec: Move canvassing to mental health center

By Agnes E. Donato

MANDALUYONG mayoral aspirant Ernesto "Bibot" Domingo has asked the Commission on Elections to transfer the canvassing of election returns from the municipal gym to the National Center for Mental Health.

In a letter sent to Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo and coursed through local election office head Mary Ann Lacuesta, Domingo said he made the request "to ensure fairness and avoid foul maneuverings by the city administration."

Domingo, a former Mandaluyong vice mayor, is running against incumbent Mayor Benhur Abalos, to whom he lost in 1998. He earlier accused Abalos of cheating by vote-padding and tampering with the ballots.

Domingo claimed that in 1998, many supporters of the administration candidates were allowed to enter the canvassing area in the municipal gym "through a secret entrance directly leading from the municipal building."

He said he had photographs of barangay officials and even soldiers armed with truncheons and long firearms who were "surreptitiously" allowed into the canvassing area.

"I got an unfair treatment during the canvassing of election returns because it was done in the municipal gym, which is in the city hall compound," he said. "I do not want a repeat of that."

He noted that his request that the canvassing be held this time in the Center for Mental Health was not without a precedent. He recalled that in 1992, the canvassing was actually conducted in that mental institution.

Domingo signed his request letter with his sister, congressional candidate Angie Domingo-Buan.

Ayos: People must know our stand

THE ALLIANCE for Youth Solidarity (Ayos) urged party-list organizations participating in the May 14 elections to convince voters that "our nominees bring quality representation."

In a statement she made after the First Party-list Congress held at the Century Pork Hotel last Tuesday, young lawyer Maya Quimpo Mayor, an Ayos nominee, said "we must convince the people that our nominees represent capable and quality representation."

"Let us inform the people of our legislative agenda," she said. "They must know what we stand for."

Other Ayos nominees, the youth sector's Vladimir Cabigao and Mike Ancheta, pointed out that the "people must be informed of our legislative agenda."

Cabigao, a youth leader and a certified public accountant (CPA), said the "people are interested in knowing how we can dominate the debate in Congress on vital legislative issues."

"The party-list representation in Congress is not a gratuitous gesture on the part of those who drafted the 1987 Constitution," Ancheta said. "This is in recognition of the rights of the marginalized and disadvantaged sectors of our society."

Earlier, various youth and student groups urged the Commission on Elections to launch a massive information drive to enable the people to understand the importance of the party-list system in the country.

More seats for councilors in Munti

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has signed into law Republic Act No. 9016 increasing the number of the elected members of the Sangguniang Panglungsod of Muntinlupa City from six to eight councilors for each of the city's two districts.

RA 9016 was introduced by Rep. Ignacio "Toting" R. Bunye in the House of Representatives. Its Senate counterpart bills were introduced by Senators Juan Flavier and Renato Cayetano. It aims to ensure greater representation of the increasing population of the city in the Sangguniang Panlungsod.

"The conversion of Muntinlupa into a highly urbanized city in 1995 has brought substantial developments in the city's economy, resulting in greater influx not only of investments but of migrants from the provinces," Bunye said.

"The substantial increase in the city's population is always coupled with an increase in their needs, necessitating additional councilors for each district to represent and advance their interests in the city council."

With the passage of RA 9016, the voters of Muntinlupa will now vote for eight councilors per district.

MELON'S TEAM

Melon Recto-Silverio, candidate for representative of the first district of Makati, is flanked by members of the Clean Team: (from left) Councilor Mark Joseph, council aspirants Mike Lopez and Glen Encino, Vice Mayor Edu Manzano who is running for mayor and council candidate Jay Santiago. In the team's caucus in Barangay Palanan, Manzano presented actual documents through an overhead projector as proof of the alleged corruption committed by the present administration. He cited the procurement of 300 computers for the Makati Science High School and the police department. He said each computer was bought for P130,480 when the actual price was only P25,480.00. He said each GP88 radio for the police was bought for P72,271 when the actual price was only P15,000. "The real power is in the people of Makati," Manzano said. "To have a good government, people should open their eyes and vote wisely on May 14."

JV AND BOY

JV Estrada had teamed up with former Philippine Sports Commissioner Leonardo "Boy" Celles to lead the Puwersa ng Masa-Partido ng Masang Pilipino in San Juan. Estrada is running for mayor and Celles for vice mayor. Above, JV and Boy meet residents of Barangay Rivera in the town's District I during the pair's house-to-house campaign.

Ex-cop shot dead

BY JEROME ANING

INNOCENT kids among the witnesses to the execution.

A FORMER policeman earlier accused of robbing a Binondo businessman was shot dead by unidentified suspects yesterday morning in Quiapo, Manila.

Ex-PO3 Renato Palma, 36, married, of 913 Padilla Street, Quiapo, died on the spot after he was shot in the right eye, police said.

Palma, formerly assigned to the national police headquarters in Camp Crame, Quezon City, was last seen leaving his house at about 6 a.m. by his father Dominador, said SPO1 Edison Bertoldo of the Western Police District's homicide section.

Palma's neighbor Lea Bien, 20, a Computer Science freshman, told police she was in the kitchen when she heard two gunshots around 10 a.m.

She told SPO1 Bertoldo that when she went out to check, she saw the bleeding victim slumped on the pavement at the corner of Elizondo and Norzagaray streets.

The victim's body was taken to the Tres Amigos Funeral Parlor in Paco.

Investigators said policemen from the Plaza Miranda community precinct arrested the former lawman on March 27 after Binondo businessman Bernardo Abragante, 29, accused Palma of robbing him sometime ago.

Palma was charged for the crime but was later released after he posted bail.

The police are also confirming reports that Palma had been involved in extorting money from persons he accosted for drug pushing in Quiapo.

Investigators are having a hard time identifying the suspects because not one among the witnesses to the shooting would step up to testify. *With reports from Jesusa Raflores and Myla Torres.*

Teener slain in frat war

A 17-YEAR-OLD boy was killed while four others were injured after their group clashed with a rival fraternity in Bagong Silang, Caloocan City the other night. Police identified the fatality as Paolo Jose of Phase 8-A, Package 11, Block 124, Lot 40, Bagong Silang. He suffered several gunshot wounds and died while undergoing treatment at the Dr. Jose Rodriguez Hospital in Tala, Caloocan. The victims were in front of Video City on the main road of Phase 1, Bagong Silang when masked members of their rival fraternity Oblack arrived at about 7:30 p.m., said case investigator PO3 Elvis Imperial of the Caloocan Police Station 1. After a brief argument, the suspects pulled out homemade shotguns or "sumpak" and repeatedly shot the victims. The suspects fled right after the incident. Operatives of the Police Community Precinct 9 later arrested a 14-year-old suspect and a certain Jessie Real.

Christian Esguerra

SHABU MASTER

Chinese national Yang Lin, nabbed while urinating, stands impassively after the Makati Police charged him with possession of over 2 kilos of shabu worth about P2 million.

ERIK ARAZAS

Inmates hurt in QC jail clash

SEVERAL inmates were injured when two rival gangs clashed at the Quezon City jail yesterday afternoon, police said.

Investigators at the Central Police Station 10 said the clash occurred at 12:10 p.m. after members of the Batang City Jail gang reportedly attacked the cell of the Sigue-Sigue Sputnik group.

A certain Miguel Cerera of the BCJ allegedly started the riot by throwing stones at the rival group.

The names of the victims were not immediately made available. The victims suffered several cuts and bruises all over their bodies after they were hit with stones.

City jail officials were able to prevent a more violent clash by containing the rival gangs in their respective cells.

Christian V. Esguerra

Illegal recruiter, former cop arrested

POLICE arrested on Tuesday an alleged illegal recruiter who reportedly extorted P135,000 from 18 victims, and a former Malabon police officer and his companion for allegedly refusing to pay a P20,000 bill in a Quezon City nightclub.

Operatives of the Central Police Station 10 nabbed Patricio Laude, 38, inside his house in Kapalaran, Litex Road at about 1:30 p.m. the other day, following complaints of 18 people he had allegedly swindled.

Police records showed the suspect promised employment in Brunei to Generosa Edu and 17 others during a meeting in Cubao, Quezon City sometime last month.

Each victim was asked to pay P7,500 in placement fee.

Edu said the suspect introduced himself as an authorized recruiter for employment in Brunei and was a business partner of one Mahade Naire, investigation showed.

But after collecting P135,000 in placement fees, the suspect allegedly disappeared, prompting the victims to file a complaint at the CPD Station 10.

Meanwhile, CPD operatives arrested Insp. Leopoldo Villoga, 50, said to be a former member of the Malabon Police, and resident of Barangay Potrero, Manila.

His companion, one Gerardo Flores, 38, of Roosevelt Avenue, Quezon City was also arrested after he and Villoga allegedly refused to pay their P20,111.60 bill at Stardust KTV on Quezon Avenue *Christian Esguerra*

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
BUREAU OF FOOD AND DRUGS
Civic Drive, Filinvest Corporate City
Alabang, Muntinlupa

MALAYA AT MALUSOG
NA PAMAYANAN

April 5, 2001

BUREAU CIRCULAR
NO. 3, Series of 2001

TO: **All Manufacturers, Distributors, Wholesalers and Retailers of registered products, which do not conform to their registered specifications.**

SUBJECT: **Cancellation of the Certificates of Product Registration, Seizure and Confiscation of BFAD registered products, which do not conform to their registered specifications.**

This office has confirmed reports that certain BFAD registered products, presently being manufactured and offered for sale, do not conform to their registered specifications. This act results to the manufacture and sale of non-registered products which is prescribed under R.A. 3720, otherwise known as the Food, Drugs, Devices, and Cosmetic Act.

Due to the seriousness of the violation and to provide immediate protection to the consumers against the hazards of non-registered and/or adulterated products, please take notice that the Certificates of Product Registration previously issued to these products shall be cancelled immediately upon a conclusive finding by this Office of the non-conformance and/or adulteration. Furthermore, all these violative products shall be seized and confiscated in accordance with the procedure provided for under Administrative Order No. 72 Series of 1983.

For strict compliance.

WILLIAM B. TORRES, Ph.D.
Director

April 19, 2001 – Inquirer

MARIKINA

Inaanyayahan ang lahat ng mga Taga-Marikina sa ikatlong taong pagdiriwang ng

Ka-Angkan 2001

Kapistahan ng mga Angkan

Bahagi ng Paggunita ng 371st Founding Anniversary ng Bayang Marikina

APRIL 20 - 22, 2001
Gazebo Site Tayug Kalumpang

April 20, FRIDAY

7 AM	*Pasayo / Paingay*
8 AM-12 NN	*Trabaho at Kasiyahan*
12 NN-3 PM	*Piknik ng mga Angkan*
3 PM	Photo & *Antigo* Exhibit
4 PM-9 PM	*Paggawa ng mga Gimik*
6 PM-10 PM	*Angkan (Ala-Sing-A-Long)* Miss Gay *Ka-Angkan* Variety Show

Participating *Angkans*

Angkan	*Contact Person*	*Contact Nos.*
Ampalaya	Rhodora Santiago	645-3226
Andres	Esmeraldo Reyes	942-0318
Asuncion	Zenaida Asuncion	645-2891
Bernardino	Kap. Bodjie Bernardino	933-4504
Bulik	Julio Santos Kap. Mario de Leon	646-6453
Butiki	Alfredo de Guzman Nerie dela Paz	933-2064
De Guzman	V-Mayor Del de Guzman Ruding de Guzman	646-1632

April 21, SATURDAY

8 AM-9 AM	*Almusal ng mga Angkan*
9 AM-12 NN	*Paggawa ng mga gimik*
12 NN-2 PM	*Piknik ng mga Angkan*
2 PM-4 PM	*Paggawa ng mga gimik*
4 PM-6 PM	*Saranggolahan* Parlor Games
6 PM	Footwear Fashion Show
8 PM	*Harana*
7 PM	Mini Concert Variety Show

Participating *Angkans*

Angkan	*Contact Person*	*Contact Nos.*
Desiderio	Dr. Charing Santos	646-2351
Estanislao	Tita Santos Arsenio Estanislao	682-0001
Fernando	Ramon & Dado Fernando Leslie & Boyet Fernando	941-8805
Hilot	Kgd. Ferdie Marco Eddie de Guzman	646-7140
Kamatis	Edna Evangelista Rizalina Aquino	641-3359
Kwitib	Januario San Diego	942-4534

April 22, SUNDAY

8 AM-12 NN	*Pinal na paghahanda para sa* Grand Parade
12 NN	*Tanghalian ng mga Angkan*
2 PM	*Parada... Parada..*
7 PM	*Pormal na Programa at* Awarding
8 PM	Grand Concert (Freestyle, Lani Misalucha, Noty Notes)

Participating *Angkans*

Angkan	*Contact Person*	*Contact Nos.*
Nepomuceno	Naty Cabalquinto	646-1623
Pertong Intsik	Reynaldo Baluyot Angelita Salvador	942-1708
Santos-Mora	Butch Santos	681-6603
Reyes	Jeana de Leon	682-6818
Tabo	Felicidad Flores	645-3065
Tiburcio	Jean Tiburcio Kgd. Paz Tiburcio	933-4476 941-6853

Ka-Angkan Fest Committee Coordinator:
Gloria Buenaventura Tel. Nos. 942-1204/05

Chivas brings music capitals to Malate

CHIVAS Regal on April 27 brings to Manila the five music capitals of the world in a music party on Nakpil and Orosa streets in Malate.

Chivas Regal Scotch Whisky gathered together the greatest minds in the local music scene for "Chivas When You Know Music . . . Trip Out," the launch party for the Chivas Regal When You Know Music promotion.

The promo event will give a lucky individual the chance to fly to one of the five music capitals of the world—Vienna, London, Jamaica, New Orleans and Ibiza.

Nakpil Street will be the venue for the classic sounds of Vienna as the Neo Classic Ensemble headed by Butch Roxas performs the music of Bach and Beethoven.

Polyester, considered as the band that brought British pop to the local club and bar scene, will perform British pop.

Reggae, the delirious and bewildering music from Jamaica, will be played by Brownman Revival.

Brownbeat All Stars brings to Malate the fabulous Mardi Gras of New Orleans.

The event will be capped with a foam party reminiscent of rave parties held in one of the world's most well known party places, Ibiza.

The event's DJs will be Erwin Edralin, Don-Don Renato and Noel de Brackinghe.

For more information, please call Owen Bobadilla at Ogilvy and Mather, 885-00-01, or Leah Caringal at 812-35-42.

NEO Classic Ensemble.

Shaggy hot and on top

SHAGGY makes it to the charts again with his latest single, "Angel," from his album "Hot Shot," distributed in the Philippines by MCA Universal.

Shaggy duplicates the success of his previous single, "It Wasn't Me," that became the No. 1 single and album at the time of its release.

For 10 weeks now "Angel" has been No. 1 in Billboard's Hot 100. It is the first song in the history of pop to earn more than 8,000 airplays in one week in the Top 40 radio formats.

The album "Hot Shot" remains as No. 1 in Billboard Magazine's album chart. The album is now six times platinum in the US, four times platinum in Canada and three times platinum in New Zealand.

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4	DOLBY SURROUND	MADERAZO
5	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	ABAKADA ..INA
6	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED
7	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSE FOR RENOVATION
8	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSE FOR RENOVATION

SM CENTERPOINT 7149522 • 7161416

1	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA ... INA
2	DOLBY SURROUND	SEDUCER
3	DTS	SWEET NOVEMBER
4	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CROW
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	DOUBLE TAKE
6	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	MADERASO
7	DOLBY SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
8	DOLBY SURROUND	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
9	DOLBY SURROUND	RUGRATS
10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ATTACK FORCE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2	DOLBY SURROUND	ATTACK FORCE
3	DOLBY SURROUND	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
4	DOLBY DIGITAL	RUGRATS
5	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA ... INA
6	DOLBY SURROUND	MADERASO
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	SWEET NOVEMBER
8	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CROW
9	DOLBY SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
10	DOLBY SURROUND	DOULBLE TAKE
11	DOLBY SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
12	DOLBY SURROUND	SEDUCER

SM CITY MANILA 5239240

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	ANTI-TRUSRT
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	DOUBLE TAKE
3	DOLBY SURROUND	ATTACK FORCE
4	DOLBY SURROUND	SWEET NOVEMBER
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	RUGRATS
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
7	DOLBY SURROUND	THEY NEST
8	DOLBY SURROUND	THE SEDUCER
9	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA ... INA
10	DOLBY SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
11	DOLBY SURROUND	AIR BUD 3
12	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CROW

GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR 8820950

1	ULTRA SURROUND	HAPDI NG TAG-INIT
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE CROW

SM MEGAMALL 6331901 • 6329401

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4	DTS	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	RUGRATS
9	DOLBY SURROUND	SWEET NOVEMBER
10	DOLBY SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	DOUBLE TAKE
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE CROW

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CROW
2	DOLBY SURROUND	MADERASO
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ABAKADA
4	DOLBY SURROUND	RUGRATS
5	DOLBY SURROUND	AIR BUD 3
6	DOLBY SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
7	DTS	SWEET NOVEMBER
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	DOUBLE TAKE
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
10	DOLBY SURROUND	SEDUCER
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ATTACK FORCE
12	DOLBY SURROUND	CROUCHING TIGER

SM SOUTHMALL 8066888 • 8066782

1	ULTRA SURROUND	RUGRATS
2	ULTRA SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	SWEET NOVMEBER
4	ULTRA SURROUND	ABAKADA INA
5	ULTRA SURROUND	MADERASO
6	ULTRA SURROUND	ATTACK FORCE
7	ULTRA SURROUND	THE CROW
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
9	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSE FOR RENOVATION
10	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSE FOR RENOVATION

TUTUBAN CENTER 2514302

1	ULTRA SURROUND	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE CROW
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	MADERASO
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ABAKADA ... INA

SM CEBU 2313876

1	DOLBY SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
2	ULTRA SURROUND	GLADIATOR
3	ULTRA SURROUND	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
4	ULTRA SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY
5	ULTRA SURROUND	UHAW SA INIT
6	ULTRA SURROUND	RUGRATS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	BAIT

SM ILOILO 3209422

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2	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
3	ULTRA SURROUND	BAIT
4	ULTRA SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
5	ULTRA SURROUND	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	RUGRATS
7	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
8	ULTRA SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY

SM PAMPANGA 7128015

1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	RUGRATS
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3	DOLBY SURROUND	THEY NEST
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	AIR BUD-3
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	UHAW SA INIT
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4 ANTI-TRUST in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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3 (DTS) RUGRATS
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5 GOLD (DOLBY) THE GIFT
6 GOLD (SDDS) DUBLE TAKE
7 GOLD (DOLBY) THE CROW
8 (DOLBY) THEY NEST
9 (DOLBY) MADERASO
10 (DOLBY) ABAKADA INA

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3 (DTS)
4
5
6 (DTS)
Golden Pearl THX

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2 (DTS)
3 ABAKADA INA

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4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) SWEET NOVEMBER
5 ALIW MASARAP ANG LASON

Metropolis
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1 MADERAZO
2 SEDUCER
3 ABAKADA ... INA
4 CLOSED
5 SWEET NOVEMBER
6 GLADIATOR
7 DI MAPPIGIL ANG INIT
8 THE CROW

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2 MS CONGENIALITY

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2 EVANGELINE 14
3 FAMILY MAN

Spring
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1 DRACULA
A EVANGELINE 14

JC Cinema
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626
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3 CLOSED

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City
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2 SEDUCER
3 RUGRATS
4 MADERAZO
5 AIR BUD-3
6 ABAKADA ... INA
7 (DTS) ANTI-TRUST
8 (SDDS) DOUBLE TAKE
9 (DOLBY) THE CROW

Caloocan
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2 ABAKADA ... INA
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5
6

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
2 ABAKADA ... INA
3 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
4 (SDDS) MADERAZO
5 SEDUCER
6 (DOLBY) THE CROW
7 (DTS) SWEET NOVEMBER
8 RESERVE
9 RESERVE

Commonwealth
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1 (DTS) SWEET NOVEMBER
2 CLOSED
3 ABAKADA ..INA
4 ANTI-TRUST
5 (SDDS) RUGRATS
6 SEDUCER
7 (DOLBY) THE CROW
8 MADERAZO

Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 ABAKADA ... INA
2 MADERAZO
3 (DTS) SWEET NOVEMBER
4 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
5 (SDDS) SEDUCER
6 (DOLBY) RESERVE
7 (DOLBY) RESERVE

Universal
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1 ABAKADA INA

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 ABAKADA INA

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(Manila) tel 734.7724
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MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 MADERAZO
2 ABAKADA ... INA
3 SWEET NOVEMBER
4 DEMON GATE

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
3 MADERAZO

Super Cinerama
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238
1 SWEET NOVEMBER
2 MADERAZO
3 ALIW MASARAP ANG BAWAL
4 ABAKADA ... INA
5 UUBUSIN KO ANG BALA

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 MADERAZO
2 ABAKADA ... INA
3 EVANGELINE 14
4 PRODIGAL FIGHTER
5 CLOSED
6 CLOSED

Baclaran LRT Cinema
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2 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
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CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
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1 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
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3 (DTS) ABAKADA INA

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
2 (DTS) RUGRATS
3 (DOLBY) THEY NEST
4 ABAKADA INA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
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2 MADERAZO
3 RUGRATS
4 (DTS) ABAKADA INA

Lianas MovieCity
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1 (DOLBY) THEY NEST
2 ABAKADA ... INA
3 (DTS) RUGRATS
4 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
5 ROARING LION REGENT DRAGON

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 ABAKADA INA
2 RUGRATS
3 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101
1 ABAKADA INA
2 RUGRATS
3 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311
1 GLADIATOR
2 BABAENG PUTIK
3 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1 THE GIFT
2 ABAKADA INA
3 RUGRATS

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 ABAKADA ... INA
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3 DRACULA
4 EVANGELINE 14

Cabuyao
CINEMAS TEL (049) 5314806
1 (DTS) DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
2 (DTS)

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
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Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
2 ABAKADA ... INA
3 UUBUSIN KO ANG BALA

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 THEY NEST
2 THE GIFT
3 QUILLS
4 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT

Berma
tel 879.2168
1 ABAKADA ... INA
2 ALIW MASARAP ANG LASON

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269
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2 MADERAZO
3 ABAKADA ..INA
4 PROOF OF LIFE

Jade Cinema
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2 ABAKADA ... INA
3 THEY NEST
4 (DTS EX) QUILLS

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④ RUGRATS
⑤ ABAKADA... INA
⑥ THE CROW
⑦ ANTI TRUST

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④ SWEET NOVEMBER
⑤ MADERASO
⑥ EVANGELINE 14

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① SAVE THE LASTY DANCE
② BAIT
③ RUGRATS
④ MS. CONGENIALITY
⑤ DEMON GATE
⑥ BABAING PUTIK

DOLBY dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	ABAKADA... INA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	SGT. MADERAZO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	SWEET NOVEMBER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	THE CROW
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	RUGRATS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	AIR BUD-3
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	DOUBLE TAKE
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	SWEET NOVEMBER
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	UUBUSIN KO ANG BALA
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	ALIW MATAMIS ANG LASON
MIRAMAR	VIRGIN WIFE/TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	THE CROW
ODEON-2	ALIW MATAMIS ANG LASON
ROBEN	ABAKADA... INA
TANDEM-1	UHAW SA INIT
TANDEM-2	TOTAL AIKIDO
TIMES	PROOF OF LIFE/DEMON GATE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	BAYAD NA PATI KALULUWA MO
QUEZON-1	ALIW MATAMIS ANG LASON
REMAR	ABAKADA... INA
REMAR-2	ALIW MATAMIS ANG LASON
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	RUGRATS
CINEMA-2	SWEET NOVEMBER
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	ABAKADA... INA
CINEMA-2	MADERASO
CINEMA-3	SEDUCER
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE CROW
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
CINEMA-6	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
CINEMA-7	GLADIATOR
CINEMA-8	DRACULA 2000
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	SWEET NOVEMBER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	RUGRATS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	DOUBLE TAKE
CINEMA-12	AIR BUD 3
CINEMA-14	ANTI-TRUST
CINEMA-15	ABAKADA ... INA
LORES	
CINEMA-2	DI MATIGIL ANG INIT / HIYAS
CINEMA-3	MS CONGENIALITY
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	CHOCOLAT
CINEMA-2	ANTI-TRUST
CINEMA-3	RUGRATS IN PARIS
CINEMA-4	DOUBLE TAKE
CINEMA-5	THE CROW
CINEMA-6	SWEET NOVEMBER

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Refreshing departure

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WE watched a number of inspirational programs on TV last Holy Week. Channel 7's "Eat Bulaga" telecast a special Lenten episode in which cohosts **Vic Sotto** and **Joey de Leon** played best friends whose friendship turned sour when Joey fell in love with Vic's former wife (**Pinky Amador**).

The episode was a refreshing departure from the usual "Eat Bulaga" hi-jinks. This time, Vic played it troubled and morose, instead of his standard slap-happy TV persona.

Joey tried to balance the seriousness with some offhand cracks that he couldn't resist making, but on the whole, the episode was still a thought-provoking departure that made viewers realize that the noontime show's hosts had more going for them than their signature *pilyo* ways.

Another interesting Holy Week drama was the replay of a "May Himala" episode starring **Lorna Tolentino** and **Joel Torre** as the parents of a seriously sick boy.

Their child's illness tested their marriage, but it also brought them together as a family in the end. The episode's twist was the appearance of the couple's dear, departed daughter in a determined bid to save the boy's life.

The child actors who played the young boy and his older sister impressed viewers with their natural acting, and their refusal to act precocious and *pa*-cute, like so many child performers do in these parts.

Then, last Saturday, **Alessandra de Rossi** starred in "Siya'y Pinagpala," a drama that had her playing a troubled teenager who became a Marian visionary. The religious drama was standard stuff, going pretty much through the same territory as the old Nora Aunor starrer, "Himala."

The storytelling was also quite slow, but Alessandra did well in her role, giving the story a strong fulcrum around which to revolve. The tale's update was the fact that the young visionary used a computer to share Mother Mary's messages to the world.

This modern touch could have worked, but it was awkwardly, presented, so it ended up sticking out like a sore thumb.

Finally, another "May Himala" replay had **Glydel Mercado** playing yet another visionary—only this time, she was a convict. It was good to see Glydel essaying a role that didn't require her to dare and bare, but the episode as a whole didn't do as well.

We're glad that our TV stations are going more for inspirational dramas these days, but their plots are often too standard to be really involving. Stories about visionaries and miracles need to be bolstered by genuine insights instead of cliché sermons to truly make their spiritual mark.

So, which of these shows came off best of all? The "Eat Bulaga" episode with Vic and Joey. It didn't have any visionaries and miracles, but the way that the combative leads resolved their problem was believable, felt and truly inspiring.

Wake-up call

SOME TV channels are getting quite a lot of attention with their voter education spots. What makes these "infomercials" different is the fact that they go beyond mere platitudes and talk about corrupt politicians and gullible voters in specific terms.

The hope is that all of these hard-hitting spots will make voters realize that they are a big part of the country's electoral problems, and make them change their ways when they go to the polls next month.

How can we quantify the effectivity of these political infomercials? If more than the usual number of honest and qualified candidates end up in the winners' circle after May 14, we'll know that enough voters shall have taken the spots' wake-up call to heart.

Why some women like unconventional men

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

I had the time of my life appearing as a guest in "Points of View" when the topic was "Falling for unconventional men." The episode will be aired on April 30 on Studio 23.

As I said on the show, why go for the ordinary? Life's too serious as it is so when it comes to love we ought to have fun. Free-spirited men keep us sane and crazy in equal measure.

Of course, relationships with unconventional men seldom flourish, but just go with the flow. By the time a relationship is over, you will have more than enough funny memories to keep you laughing even if you grow old alone. As you sit in your rocking chair, you'll look back with no regrets because you know you've been through it all.

Allow me to share with you some of the comments of the hosts and other guests on the show. This is just a teaser. Watch the wacky episode.

Mo Twister: "I don't know what it is with some men.

They like the vamps as girlfriends but when they're ready to settle down they go for the Maria Clara types."

Cher Calvin: "I'm going out with a good guy now but I understand why some women go for the bad-boy, rugged types. It's their elusiveness and unpre-dictability that makes them attractive."

Joko Diaz: "Some people brand me a bad guy. It's just my image *naman*. Never *akong nagka*-girlfriend *nang sabay*. Believe it or not, I stick to one. One rule I follow is to never have a girlfriend if you don't have money. I don't like making the girl pay."

Jessica Zafra: "There are some women who bring out the 'bad boy' in a man. It's like they ask for it by provoking them. They enjoy the intensity, passion, the adrenaline rush."

Mar Roxas: "After a while, bad guys mellow. Some women can try to tame them but it's better if they change on their own."

Bits and pieces

ALBERT Martinez is set on putting up a stand-up comic bar in Bacolod. "That's the in thing these days," he says. "With all the problems our country has, people need a good laugh. They put up one in Cebu and it clicked so I'm thinking of opening one in Bacolod or Iloilo. There's too much competition in Manila. The humor has to be localized, though." Does that mean Albert will do more comic roles on screen as well?

Bumped into **Ian Veneracion** in Tagaytay. He was with his pretty wife **Pam** and their adorable son **Draco**. Pam just gave birth to their second baby. They were the picture of a happy couple so I teased him: "I'm amazed how you manage to stay faithful amid all the temptations in show biz. *Walang kaintriga-intriga ang* marriage *niyo*." He smiled "Good boy *ako*. I'm allergic to *intriga* so I try to stay away from trouble. When I'm in the mood for adventure, I go skydiving." I countered: "That's also dangerous. Don't you think it's safer to be the center of intrigues instead?" He just laughed out loud.

Aga Muhlach and **Charlene Gonzales** took a respite from their wedding preparations and went to Tali beach for some R & R during Holy Week. They just enjoyed the sun, the sea and each other. Wonder if the sound of the waves reminded them think that marriage is indeed a sink-or-swim thing. May you never ever need lifesavers, Charls and Morning.

I found out who **Janet McBride's** longtime secret love is, but since the guy is one of my closest friends, I promised not to squeal. Oh well. No matter how hard you try to conceal love, it will always show even when no one's looking.

Personal: Bon Voyage to my favorite laughing bag E.C. Thanks for giving my tear ducts a much-needed break. Just remember, no matter how crooked the roads are, they only lead to one place. I hope to meet you there.

For feedback, e-mail wateringhole2000@yahoo.com

Westlife returns to Manila in May

WESTLIFE, today's hottest Irish band which is behind the No. 1 hit "I Lay My Love on You," is set to perform again in the Philippines, this time at the Araneta Coliseum on May 29, at 8 p.m.

"Westlife Live in Manila" is the fifth leg of the band's 13-day, seven-nation Asian swing called "Coast to Coast 2001 Asian Tour." The tour is geared to promote the band's latest album, "Coast to Coast."

The Asian tour kicks off on May 22 in Bangkok and will also cover Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Seoul and Hong Kong until June 3.

Tickets to the Westlife show are on sale starting April 20 at SM Ticketnet outlets at all SM department stores and the Araneta Coliseum.

"Westlife Live in Manila" will feature the five members of the Irish pop phenomenon performing their greatest hits and more, including "Swear it Again," "If I Let You Go," "Flying Without Wings," "Seasons in the Sun," "Fool Again" and "I Lay My Love on You."

The band first performed in Manila on May 9, 2000 at the Folk Arts Theater.

Westlife returns on a wave of popularity as Asia's No. 1 selling international artists following the five-times platinum status of "Coast to Coast," and the band's return to the top of the charts with its eighth No. 1 single, "Uptown Girl," a remake of the Billy Joel classic.

The Westlife saga began three years ago in Sligo in Dublin, Ireland, when Shane Filan, 20, Kian Egan, 19, and Mark Feehily, 19, decided to form a band after their successful performance together in their school's production of the musical "Grease."

The big break of the band, which initially was known as IOU, came when it caught the attention of Boyzone's manager, Louis Walsh, who subsequently forged an agreement with Ronan Keating to act as co-manager. With Nicky Bryne, 21, and Bryan McFadden, 19, as new members, Westlife was born.

In April 1999, the band, now known as Westlife, released its debut single, "Swear it Again," which climbed to the top of the British and Irish charts and became the biggest-selling debut single ever in Ireland.

This was followed by four consecutive record-breaking No. 1 hits, including "Christmas" and "Millennium No. 1," giving the group the distinction of being the only boy band to have its first four singles debut at No. 1 in the UK

"Westlife Live in Manila" is presented in cooperation with BMG Records (official record label) and with the support of MTV Asia and Manila Galleria Suites. It is also backed by radio stations dwKC 93.9, dwTM 89.9, Yes FM 101.1, Star FM 102.7, dw RX 93.1 and Kool 106.

Call 911-5555 for reservations and inquiries.

WESTLIFE

Donya Buding for senator

THE QUEEN of all socialites, Donya Buding, marks another milestone in her bejeweled life as she runs for senator in "Buding 4 Senator," which will run at the Music Museum on April 20 and 21, then at Onstage Greenbelt on May 2, 3, 9 and 10, and then back at the Music Museum on May 11 and 12.

Donya Buding will tackle everything you've always wanted to know about how to make this country work, including a special question-and-answer portion with select members of the audience. She will talk about the "jueteng" scandal, the millions, the mistresses and the mansions. She will bash her senatorial opponents and will reveal how she used to beat up GMA when they were little girls cavorting in Guagua, Pampanga.

Helping Donya Buding are Drago, her trusted aide de camp and rumored lover, and Boni, her dance instructor and political adviser.

"Buding 4 Senator" is directed by Tony Espejo from a script written by Joey Reyes. Tickets to the show are available at the Music Museum (721-6726 or 721-0635), Onstage Greenbelt (752-7862) and at the Gantimpala Theater Foundation office.

Donya Buding will be wearing creations by Danilo Franco. Official photographer is Raul Teehankee.

NANETTE Inventor as Buding.

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Children below 13 yrs old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

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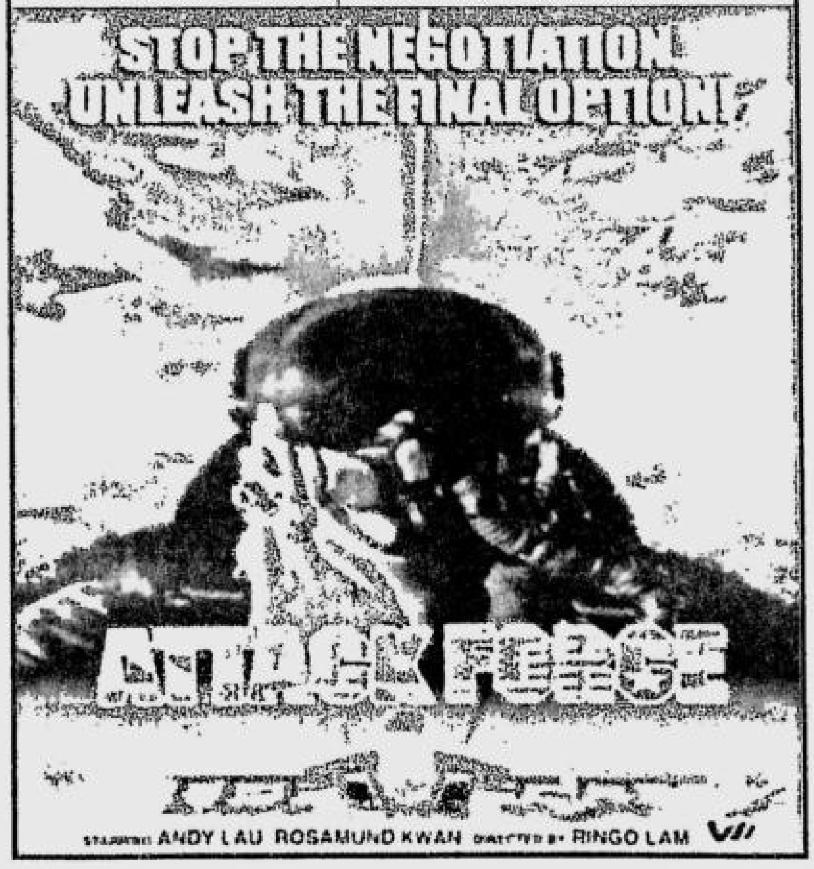
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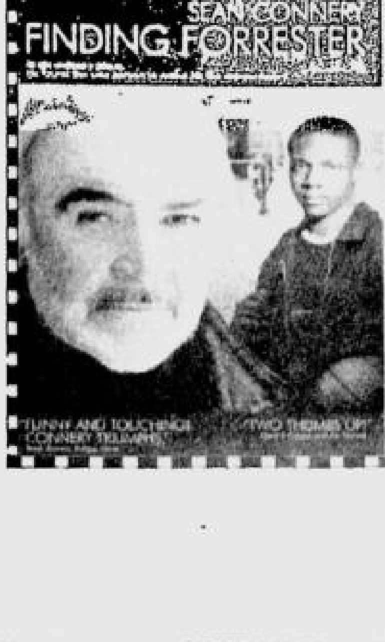
FINDING FORRESTER
starring
SEAN CONNERY



From Academy Award nominated director Gus Van Sant and starring Academy Award winning actor Sean Connery, Finding Forrester is an inspirational drama about a bright black student on a basketball scholarship who meets a reclusive novelist who encourages him to follow his dream of becoming a writer.
WINNER
Prize of the Guild of German Art House Cinemas
@ Berlin International Film Festival 2001
Best Male Newcomer (Rob Brown)
@ Las Vegas Film Critics Society Awards 2000

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CHOCOLAT - P13 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10	ANTI TRUST-P13 12:40, 2:55, 5:10, 7:25, 9:40	RUGRATS IN PARIS - G 12:50, 2:40, 4:30, 6:20, 8:10, 10:00
DOUBLE TAKE -P13 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	THE CROW-R18 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40; 9:50	SWEET NOVEMBER - P 13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

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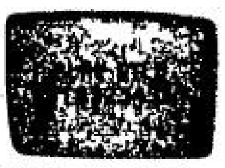
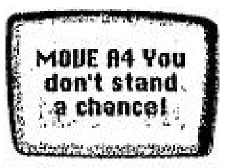
Choose from any of the three games:

- "Tic-Tac-Toe" (T3) Place your symbols in a row of three before your opponent does.
- "Gothello" (GTLO) Switch your opponent's symbols into your own by making moves in slots where your opponent's symbols are.
- "BingoTxt" (BT) Place your symbols in a row of four before your opponent does.

1. To register, key in REG, followed by your name and send to 238. Only registered players will be ranked versus other players.



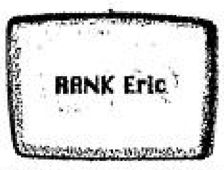
2. To play a game, key in PLAY, followed by your game of choice, your opponent's registered name or celfone number, and send to 238


MOVE A4 You don't stand a chance!

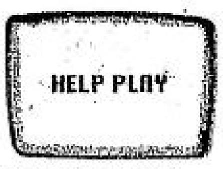
3. To make a move during the game, key in MOVE, followed by the position, your comment to your opponent and send to 238.

SAY Hello! Make your move!

4. To send messages to your opponent, key in SAY followed by your message and send to 238



5. To find out your ranking, key in RANK, followed by your name and send to 238. To find out the top 10 players in a game, key in RANK, the name of the game and send to 238.



6. To get more info on SMART TextGames, key in HELP, followed by the command you need help on and send to 238.

7. To quit game, key in QUIT and send to 238.

SMART TextGames Rates: P2.50/message sent

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B1
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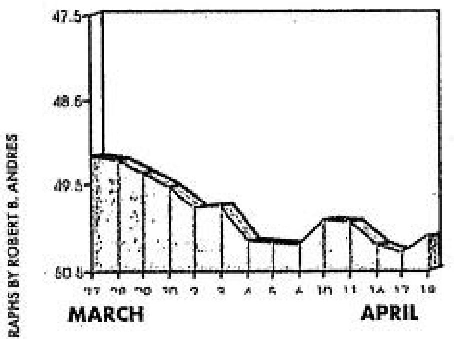


GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

P50.11 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
April 18, 2001

¥ 122.88 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 122.88 as of 5 p.m., April 18, 2001

GOLD:$260.20/260.70
per ounce Hong Kong,
April 18, 2001

STOCK MARKET

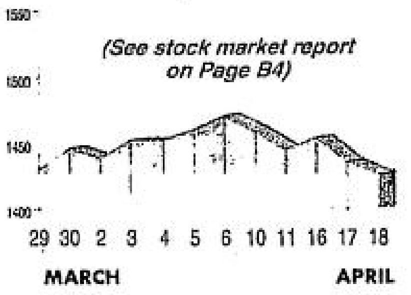
Shares end lower

SHARES closed lower yesterday, dragged down by losses in blue chips Equitable PCI Bank and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., traders said.

Negative sentiment gen-

SHARES/ B4

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B4)

2-month slump in imports points to slowing economy

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S trade surplus rose sharply in the first two months of this year, but this has caused some worry as the 9.1-percent drop in imports behind it reflected weak domestic demand and pointed to slower exports. The merchandise trade surplus rose by 112.5 percent to $1.03 billion for January and February 2001 from the year-ago figure of $485 million, official data showed.

The National Statistics Office said cumulative imports for January and February stood at $4.665 billion, down from last year's $5.134 billion, and exports rose by a modest 1.3 percent $5.694 billion from $5.619 billion.

"When I saw the headline numbers, the import growth was weaker than we had expected and it does confirm the weak domestic demand as well as the bleak export outlook ahead," said Maya Pinto, economist at Singapore's IDEAglobal.com.

"The weak import number points to weak domestic demand and a bleak export outlook, at least (in) the first half."

Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas said the trade figures were alarming since it indicated a continuing downtrend in the country's purchases of raw materials needed to create new business opportunities and expand existing ones.

"It's depressing because what has dropped significantly are those imports which go to new businesses or are used as inputs for exports. If that goes on, we'll see slower domestic production and more layoffs of workers," Roxas said. "It would have been better if the decline was instead in the purchase of luxury consumer goods like cars."

Exports, dominated by shipments of electronics and computer parts, are largely dependent on imports of components, and a slowing in imports usually translates into lower exports within one or two months.

Exports were a driving force behind the Philippines' 3.9-percent economic growth last year, but the boost from external trade is seen waning this year due to the slowdown in the United States and Japan—the Philippines' two major trading partners.

The government has said it expects export growth to slow to around 4 percent this year from 8.7 percent in 2000.

The lower export growth forecast has prompted the Macapagal administration to concede that the economic growth for 2001 was likely to be at the lower end of its official 3.8 to 4.3 percent GDP growth target.

"I think there is no indication of factors that would merit us to say there will be a substantial increase in imports in the second half," said Helen Alvarez, research head of All Asia Securities.

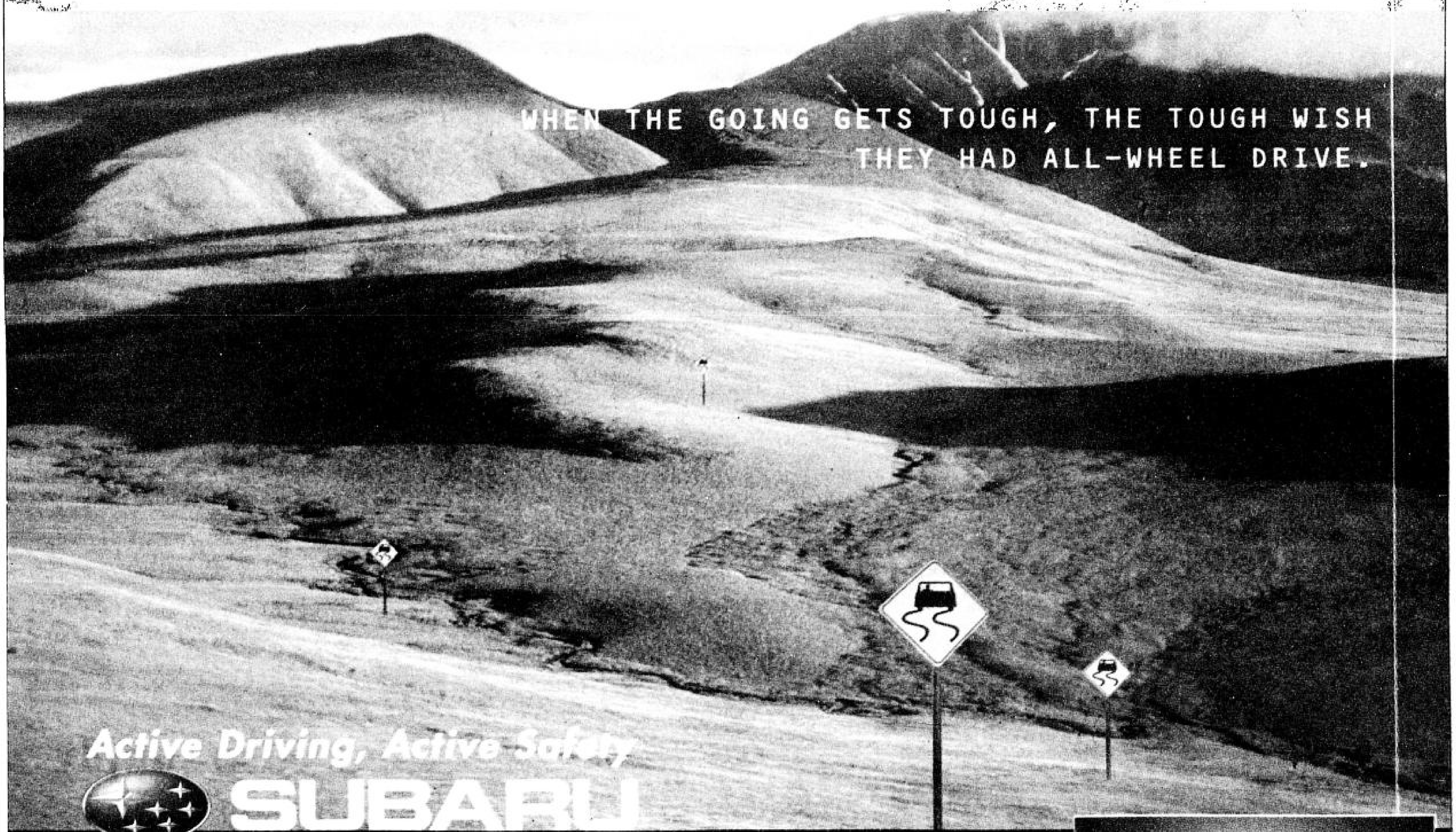
"The weakness of the peso also contributed in the slowdown of imports. Even more so for the month of March."

Imports for February alone fell 11.7 percent from a year ago to $2.193 billion. Electronics and components, which accounted for 16.7 percent of the aggregate import bill, fell 45.2 percent from February 2000 to $366.52 million.

"The trend is an affirmation of slowdown in manufacturing activities, with that sector being heavily dependent on import of raw materials," Alvarez said.

Purchases of mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials—which ranked second in aggregate imports with a 13-percent share—were up 12.8 percent year on year to $284.69 million.

TWO-MONTH/ B4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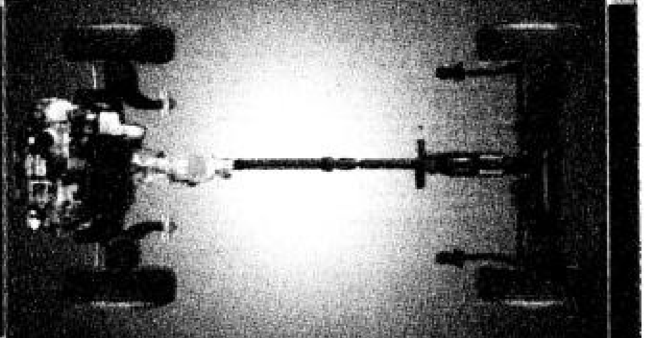

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News that makes a difference

SMC execs seen delaying probe of company deals

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

THE CHIEF of the Government Service Insurance System yesterday accused the San Miguel Corp. management of "stonewalling" government efforts to probe alleged questionable deals and contracts entered into by the food and beverage giant instigated by Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco and his allies.

GSIS president and general manager Winston F. Garcia, who is also a director of SMC, said Cojuangco's henchmen have stubbornly refused to divulge relevant information on a number of doubtful deals and contracts entered into by SMC. "There is apparently an effort to hide pertinent information on these deals and contracts. The government has a stake in this company," Garcia said.

The GSIS is at the forefront of an all-out government effort to oust Cojuangco from SMC in the firm's annual stockholders meeting on May 3. GSIS launched on Sunday a proxy fight to raise the government's nominees in SMC to eight in a bid to wrest control of SMC.

Garcia said that among the data he requested were the alleged management contract entered into by SMC with Centech Corp. (a company owned by SMC vice chair and Cojuangco right-hand man Ramon Ang) and the details of the contracts on SMC's takeover of Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. and Pure Foods Corp.

The government wanted to determine whether SMC was put at a disadvantage by these deals or whether Cojuangco profited from these deals.

In the GSIS proxy solicitation form, Garcia urged for "more transparency" on `hurried' deals entered into by SMC involving P70 billion and an independent audit to ensure that no dissipation of assets occur or have occurred under Cojuangco's management.

The Office of the Solicitor General had earlier petitioned the Supreme Court to eject the five Estrada nominees in the SMC board for neglect of their duties to protect the government's interest in the company.

Garcia was particularly furious on SMC corporate secretary Francisco Jardeleza (who replaced former Justice Jose Feria on April 2 this year) whom he accused of ignoring his request for contract details and minutes of previous board meetings. "He has not returned my calls and he has refused to accede to my request which I am entitled to as a member of the board," Garcia said. "I am going to make a formal complaint on this."

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the annual stockholders' meeting of Manila Jockey Club, Inc. ("MJCI") will be held at the Turf Room, 2000 Felix Huertas Street, Sta. Cruz, Manila on April 27, 2001, Friday at 9:00 a.m. to take up the following matters:

1. Quorum and Call to Order
2. Approval of the Minutes of the Stockholders Meeting held on May 3, 2000
3. President's Report
4. Ratification of past acts of the Board and Management
5. Election of Directors
6. Appointment of External Auditor
7. Other Matters
8. Adjournment

By resolution of the Board of Directors, the close of business hours on March 30, 2001 has been fixed as the record date for the determination of the stockholders entitled to notice of such meeting and any adjournment thereof, and to vote therein.

Pursuant to the by-laws of MJCI, proxies for the meeting should be filed with the Office of the Corporate Secretary not later than April 25, 2001.

By Authority of the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

FERDINAND A. DOMINGO
Corporate Secretary

RP to push for tariff cut delay

THE PHILIPPINES will lobby for the deferment of the tariff reduction program on petrochemical products in the Asean as part of the government's commitment to support the establishment of a $700-million naphtha cracker project in the country.

Trade Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas II said he had obtained the go-signal from Malacañang to seek the concurrence of other Asean countries to extend the tariff protection on polymers or base materials for plastic products.

Duties on polymers are scheduled to go down to 5 percent by 2003 in line with the start of the Asean Free Trade Area wherein duties on intra-Asean trade should be kept to within 5 percent to zero percent.

Roxas said the Department of Trade and Industry has yet to consult with petrochemical players on how long the tariff reduction would be deferred.

During the previous administration, the DTI agreed to maintain high tariff walls on polymers (15 percent) for the next 10 years provided that the petrochemical industry lives up to its end of the bargain by investing $700 million for the country's first naphtha cracker.

With the assurance of high tariff walls for at least 10 years, petrochemical firms are assured of having a captive market for their polymers (as imports would be more expensive because of the 15 percent duty) which will justify their investments in a naphtha cracker in Bataan. It will also help them recoup their multibillion-peso investments in building petrochemical plants a few years ago.

Roxas said that this commitment to push for an extended tariff protection for petrochemicals should spur industry players to firm up their equity commitments in the proposed naphtha cracker project being led by the state-owned PNOC Petrochemical Development Corp. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

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STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of March 23, 2001

ASSETS		
Cash & Cash Items	P	761,109,805
Due from Bangko Sentral		1,676,651,466
Due from Other Banks		6,610,075,954
Interbank Loans Receivable		1,130,102,454
Trading Account Securities (Net)		547,474,557
Investments in Bonds & Other Debt Instruments (Net)		13,939,154,788
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		14,853,640,960
Equity Investments (Net)		386,548,020
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		1,980,553,674
Other Assets (Net)		7,974,065,621
Property Owned/Acquired		4,489,979,243
Others		3,484,086,378
TOTAL ASSETS	P	49,859,377,299
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	6,876,367,936
Savings Deposits		9,347,295,109
Time Deposits		8,804,754,345
Special/Other Deposits		27,974,470
Due to Bangko Sentral		3,135,139
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		673,808,337
Bills Payable:		7,991,669,552
BSP – Rediscounts/Special Programs		19,045,668
Interbank Borrowings		6,582,014,535
Others		1,390,609,349
Unearned Income & Other Deferred Credits		533,631,608
Other Liabilities		2,586,006,143
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	36,844,642,639
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	7,087,057,923
Surplus		5,878,367,648
Surplus Reserves		49,309,089
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	13,014,734,660
TOTAL LIABILITIES & CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	49,859,377,299
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	339,427,761
Bills for Collection		68,049,775
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		7,337,132,854
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		2,058,327,135
Assets Held under Trust & Investment Management Agreements		4,781,579,763
Invested in:		
Government Securities		1,323,570,418
Other Securities, Debt Instruments And Shares of Stock		287,245,576
Loans & Discounts		14,225,506
Other Assets		3,156,538,263
Accountabilities:		
Trust & Other Fiduciary		3,767,082,319
Common Trust Funds		185,310,196
Investment/Fund Management		829,187,248
Other Contingent Accounts		87,235,678
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	14,671,752,966

Other Information

1. Deposits of:		
a) Government	P	290,843,285
b) Banks		117,200,258
c) Trust Department		2,002,192,506
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
a) Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 6% (Small Enterprises)		239.00%
b) Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 2% (Medium Enterprises)		604.00%
3. Amount of Non-Performing Loans		2,602,913,060
4. Ratio of Non-Performing Loans to Total Loan Portfolio		14.71%
5. Amount of Classified Loans and Other Risk Assets		6,195,054,967
6. General Provision for Loan Losses		580,453,044
7. Specific Provision for Loan Losses		1,092,201,967
8. Return on Equity (ROE)		7.07%
9. Amount of DOSRI Loans/Advances		601,028,678
10. Ratio of DOSRI Loans/Advances to Total Loan Portfolio		3.40%
11. Amount of Past Due DOSRI Loans/Advances		368,122
12. Ratio of Past Due DOSRI Loans/Advances to Total Loan Portfolio		0.00%

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.

We, Benjamin G. Bernas and Guia C. Lim of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd) BENJAMIN G. BERNAS
First Vice President

(Sgd) GUIA C. LIM
Executive Vice President

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 10th day of April 2001, affiants exhibiting to me their Community Tax No. 10765056 issued at Parañaque City on March 18, 2001 and Community Tax No. 09759830 issued at Manila on March 20, 2001, respectively.

Doc. No. 355
Page No. 72
Book No. XLIV
Series of 2001.

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NOTARY PUBLIC
UNTIL DEC. 31, 2001
PTR NO. 1974072
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MAKATI CITY

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Bank and Financial Subsidiaries)
As of March 23, 2001

ASSETS		
Cash & Cash Items	P	761,336,638
Due from Bangko Sentral		1,676,651,466
Due from Other Banks		6,610,075,954
Interbank Loans Receivable		1,130,102,454
Trading Account Securities (Net)		570,170,464
Investments in Bonds & Other Debt Instruments (Net)		13,939,154,788
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		14,515,823,529
Equity Investments (Net)		76,478,712
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		1,983,576,340
Other Assets (Net)		8,578,473,422
Property Owned/Acquired		4,489,979,243
Others		4,088,494,179
TOTAL ASSETS	P	49,841,843,767
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	6,863,837,495
Savings Deposits		9,289,544,369
Time Deposits		8,804,754,345
Special/Other Deposits		27,974,470
Due to Bangko Sentral		3,135,139
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		673,808,337
Bills Payable:		7,992,169,552
BSP – Rediscounts/Special Programs		19,045,668
Interbank Borrowings		6,582,014,535
Others		1,391,109,349
Unearned Income & Other Deferred Credits		533,631,608
Other Liabilities		2,638,253,792
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	36,827,109,107
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	7,087,057,923
Surplus		5,878,367,648
Surplus Reserves		49,309,089
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	13,014,734,660
TOTAL LIABILITIES & CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	49,841,843,767
Minority Interest in Allied Undertakings/Subsidiaries/Affiliates		-
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	339,427,761
Bills for Collection		68,049,775
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		7,361,816,354
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		2,074,532,535
Assets Held under Trust & Investment Management Agreements		4,781,579,763
Invested in:		
Government Securities		1,323,570,418
Other Securities, Debt Instruments And Shares of Stock		287,245,576
Loans & Discounts		14,225,506
Other Assets		3,156,538,263
Accountabilities:		
Trust & Other Fiduciary		3,767,082,319
Common Trust Funds		185,310,196
Investment/Fund Management		829,187,248
Other Contingent Accounts		87,235,678
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	14,712,641,866

Other Information

1. Deposits of:		
a) Government	P	290,843,285
b) Banks		117,200,258
c) Trust Department		2,002,192,506

2. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries:
    - a) UnionBank Currency Brokers Corporation
    - b) UBP Capital Corporation
    - c) UBP Securities, Inc.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.

We, Benjamin G. Bernas and Guia C. Lim of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd) BENJAMIN G. BERNAS
First Vice President

(Sgd) GUIA C. LIM
Executive Vice President

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 10th day of April 2001, affiants exhibiting to me their Community Tax No. 10765056 issued at Parañaque City on March 08, 2001 and Community Tax No. 09759830 issued at Manila on March 20, 2001, respectively.

Doc. No. 458
Page No. 93
Book No. XXV
Series of 2001.

MIGUEL G. PADERNAL
NOTARY PUBLIC
UNTIL DEC. 31, 2001
PTR NO. 1956380
JAN. 2, 2000
MAKATI CITY

It is facial effect, that's all

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

WE can see it coming. Any minute now, expect somebody, most likely another deranged moron in this cute administration, to correct the poor Gloriaetta. Again! It's as if that is what they breathe for. They just have to contradict their boss. In public!

Just the other day, you see, Gloriaetta had her so-called regular press briefing. This does not mean she holds "irregular" ones with a lot of computer-generated special effects. No, far from it! She is just mindful of the power of media.

In that regular briefing the other day, anyway, Gloriaetta gave media a little guarantee. She tried to assure us that the arrest of the man named Band... Wrist Band...will have no effect on the economy whatsoever. Hmm.

Some 90 days into this brand-new cute administration, you see, the biggest issue in the land still concerns Wrist Band. Will this administration put him in jail or will it not? Further, how will the warts on my armpit react?

* * *

AND so in that briefing Gloriaetta sought to project a little confidence. To her the arrest is a non-issue. Hmm. Unfortunately, I cannot attend her regular press briefings. Those who can have to be accredited by the Palace. Now I can only wonder what she means.

If you talk to bankers, they will tell you that virtually nothing moves in business these days. By her "no effect" guarantee, does poor Gloriaetta mean that nothing will still move in business? Right, boss, everything is normal. We are all still dead.

For if the arrest of Wrist Band is a non-issue to the economy, at least not directly, it is still one big political bomb that business is watching closely—for all its supposed superficial impact. And there lies the effect—a bit facial, but an effect nonetheless.

That's why I can almost hear mild expletives from somebody in the Cabinet. If this cute administration is consistent in one thing, it's the Cabinet members' ability to use their gift of gab to chastise their boss within hearing distance of media.

* * *

TAKE the Manero affair. One time, Gloriaetta met live—in person, not taped or anything rehearsed—with the ex-militia who used to kill for a living and who escaped from prison. Somebody big in the Cabinet did not like the meeting, and he said so in public.

That somebody was none other than Interior Secretary Jose Lina. But of course he could do that, because if not for him, Gloriaetta would not have gotten into power. His was the biggest role in all the efforts to put down Wrist Band. Wasn't he one of the emcees at Edsa II? The one with the horrendous voice?

Moreover, Lina was the very same Cabinet member who launched an all-out do-or-die campaign against "jueteng." Gloriaetta is only expected to take everything he dishes out to her. The campaign was such a success that, as of my deadline yesterday, jueteng still ruled like king all over the place, including his province of Laguna.

And don't forget Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo, who is said to report directly to somebody else. Pronto, the day after Gloriaetta went on record on the San Miguel case, he wasted no time in correcting his boss. He thought he knew better.

* * *

Gloriaetta's downplaying of Wrist Band's arrest as an economic issue is quite understandable. Of all people, she and her Cabinet must project confidence. It's just too bad that her Cabinet members have no qualms in saying they actually know better than her.

That doesn't inspire confidence. It's bad enough that business is still in the doldrums. Everybody is still waiting, despite what scaremongers-turned-prophets-of-boom have been saying ("Confidence is back," blah-blah-blah).

Just a few weeks ago, they told us that things would move after the Supreme Court legitimized this cute administration. They got their wish from the Supreme Court, but business still looked dead. So they've been saying now that business will be resurrected after the elections.

That's next month already! Any signs, boss? And so now they are changing their minds again. Things will really, really move as soon as the Wrist Band cases are resolved. And when might that be? Let's just hope . . . in our lifetime?

* * *

YOU can actually buy fuel tax- and duty-free, but you must buy it by the bulk. You know—for industrial use. Somebody told me that fuel, particularly diesel, is being smuggled into the country by the tankers and the trailerloads.

I mean, really, just how hard is it for our beloved authorities to detect, physically, those humongous tankers or those frighteningly long truck-trailers? Hello! It's not as if you can put one in your pocket, and then you can walk nonchalantly out of the airport, and—presto—you get away with a once-in-a-lifetime smuggling caper.

Such big-scale cheating can only be done with not-so-little help from people at the Bureau of Customs. Somebody told me that the, ah, well, "operation" enjoys the blessings of somebody big in the bureau. Really high up there, tis said.

The question is, how can we ordinary, helpless citizens help this cute administration? It has money problems, yes? For now, if I may suggest something, several millions of us must stop being jobless so that we can pay taxes to cover for the revenue lost in fuel smuggling. Have a little consideration!

* * *

WHAT about those of us who are "gainfully employed?" This only means, for instance, that you earn coffee money by selling all sorts of things in the streets, such as dirty coffee. I think that you should all gamble in the state-run casinos, instead of jueteng.

Rest assured the money which you lose gambling in those casinos will go to important charities, like the mayor of the City of Manila. I am not kidding—the government's milking cow Pagcor is the biggest contributor to that destitute person.

Last I heard, Pagcor "contributes" to the mayor something like P8 million a month. Using my knowledge of advanced calculus, I can tell you that, give or take a few crab shells, the mayor gets something like P96 million a year. Wow!

According to former Manila Mayor Mel Lopez, there is no accounting required for that money whatsoever. He should know. He was offered the same during his time. Know what? He refused the, er, "contribution."

DA sees corn supply shortfall this year

DAVAO CITY—The Department of Agriculture has warned of a possible shortfall in corn production this year as budgetary constraints hampered the delivery of certified seeds to corn farmers, particularly those in Mindanao.

Roger Chio, DA regional executive director here, said corn farmers in Northern, Central and Southern Mindanao were supposed to start planting this month but thousands of farms have been left untended due to lack of corn seeds for planting.

The Department of Budget and Management failed to release the money appropriated for the procurement of certified seeds.

Chio said the DBM did not have the money for the procurement of corn and other seeds because the government had cut back on expenditures due to the ballooning budgetary deficit.

He claimed that the budget allocation for the procurement of certified seeds too small. This, he added, forced the DA to enter into loan arrangements with private suppliers.

He said farmers in Central Mindanao and Southern Mindanao were still reeling from the adverse effects of the El Niño in 1998.

Chio said the DA received only P30 million sub-allotment for the rehabilitation of corn lands destroyed during the military's all-out-war against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Central Mindanao last year.

"The existing budget allocation of the DA regional offices in Southern Mindanao and Central Mindanao this year is barely enough to pay the salaries of its workers and for the maintenance of some of its programs," Chio said.

He said the DA was unable to pay its loans to seed suppliers due to problems in fund releases.

"With no money to pay the suppliers, the release of certified seeds was stopped, leaving thousands of corn farmers without seeds for this month's planting season," Chio said.

The cheapest 20-kilo sack of certified seeds costs at least P1,000. But Chio said this type of seeds is not of good quality as it yields only about 4.5 metric tons (MT) per hectare compared to the more expensive variety that yields six to seven MT per hectare.

Last year, corn production in Southern Mindanao dropped by 8 percent, from 679,000 MT in 1999 to 674,000 in 1999.

Chio warned that if the government would not release additional funds for seeds procurement, production will likely drop further by at least 2 percent this year.

A shortfall in corn production in Mindanao will have adverse impact on the economy as this would force the country to import corn.

He said the importation of corn was expected to affect the prices of livestock, an industry dependent on corn for feeds. ***Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

PLDT Brains IP VPN - pushing the limits of business intelligence

PLDT, the country's premiere telecommunications provider, once again affirms its commitment to bringing the latest in technology to a wider base of businesses through PLDT Brains IP VPN Solutions, the first nationwide network-based IP VPN solution in the country.

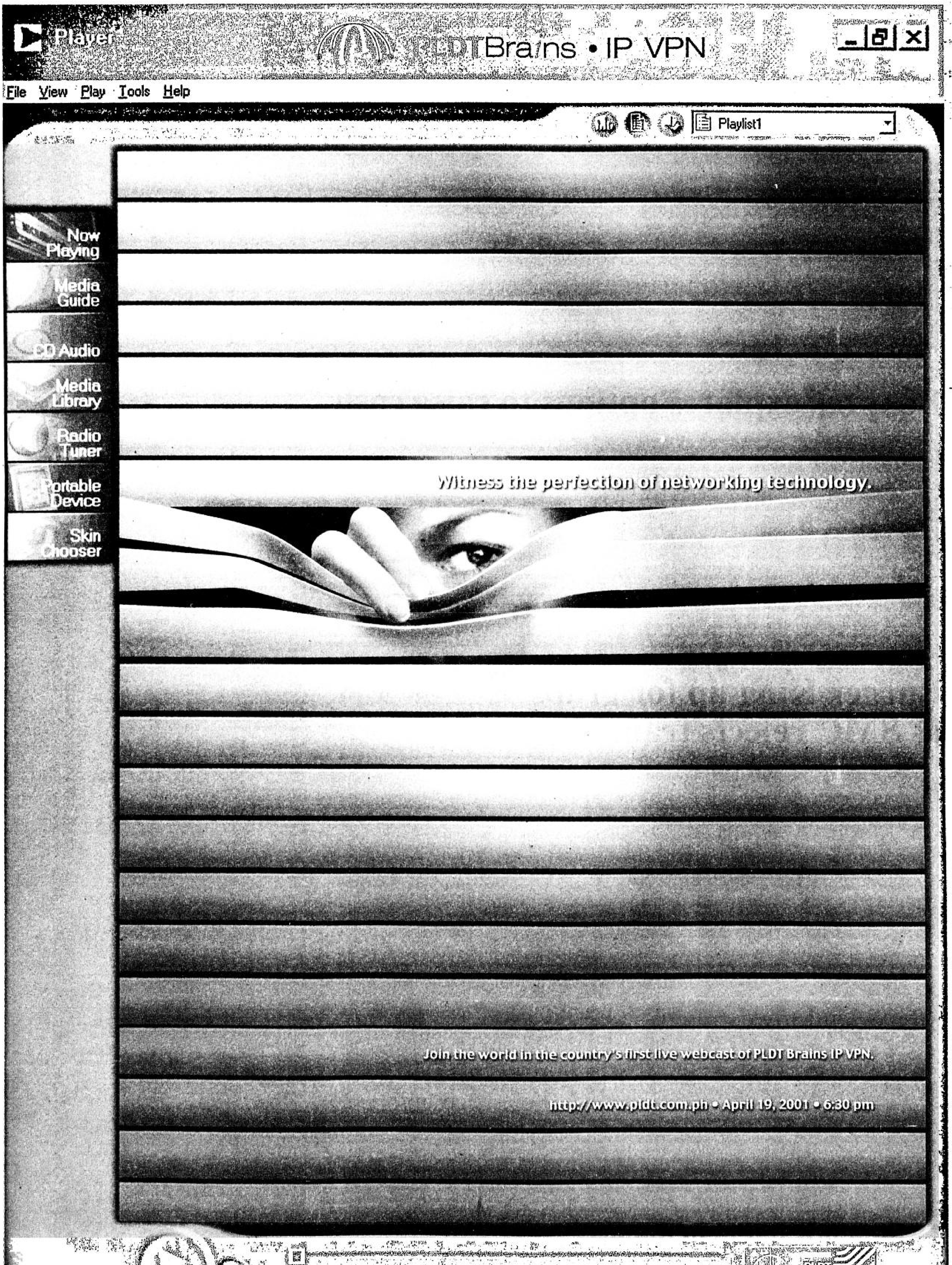
PLDT Brains IP VPN gives the corporate customer secure and reliable any-to-any connectivity between his corporate headquarters, multiple remote offices and external partners via a shared IP infrastructure from practically anywhere nationwide. Once the customer subscribes to an IP VPN port in any specific location, that port can be accessed by any of his other IP VPN ports across the country. With IP VPN, customers also enjoy scalability since the service can be provisioned with ease. As such, network sites can be freely added, reduced, or upgraded as required.

PLDT Brains IP VPN allows users working at home or on the road to connect via a secure link to their corporate server using the routing infrastructure provided by the PLDT Brains network which supports MPLS (Multi-Protocol Label Switching) and IPSec (IP Security). MPLS purges the common perception in the networking world that "shared IP infrastructure" is synonymous to "security breach". MPLS technology assigns a label for each packet before it is sent through the public network. These labels contain information such as destination, precedence, and Virtual Private Network membership for each packet, assuring companies that their information will remain within their network.

IPSec, on the other hand, is a set of standards that provides confidentiality and authentication of packets at the IP layer using tunneling as well as data encryption. The main enabler of IP VPN networks over the internet, IP Security allows PLDT to be the first carrier to offer both intranet VPN (network-based) and Internet VPN to the Corporate Customer.

PLDT Brains IP VPN proves superior to other VPN offerings due to the variety of access technologies that the customer can choose from. These include Remote Access Service (dial-up), network@home (DSL), and Diginet (dedicated lines). Also, advanced traffic engineering and automated fail-over prevent network downtime by re-routing around failed devices or links. All these plus nationwide coverage, Brains' backbone speeds of 155 Mbps up to 622 Mbps, a fully-redundant self-healing fiber optic network, an efficient 24 X 7 helpdesk, and significantly low prices, clearly makes PLDT Brains IP VPN the networking solution of choice.

PLDT Brains IP VPN will be formally launched on April 19, 2001 at the NBC Tent in Fort Bonifacio Global City. The event will be webcasted over www.pldt.com.ph starting 6:30 pm.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Media Guide
CD Audio
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Join the world in the country's first live webcast of PLDT Brains IP VPN.
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Row over Equitable control splits state pension funds

By Clarissa S. Batino and Elena R. Torrijos

AN OWNERSHIP dispute at Equitable PCI Bank is threatening to drive a wedge between the country's state pension funds.

The Social Security System declared yesterday it would continue to support Equitable PCI Bank and would provide it P2.5 billion in new capital, rebuffing its twin institution, the Government Service Insurance System, which had tried to wrestle control of the bank from the Go family.

"The SSS will support the bank, and we will make sure the bank will maintain its position as the country's No. 3 lender," SSS chair and president Vitaliano Nañagas III said.

Nañagas took a different position from GSIS general manager Winston Garcia, who had said the GSIS would withdraw support for Equitable PCI Bank's recapitalization program unless the Go family relinquishes control of the bank.

Equitable PCI Bank said it would offer P5 billion to P10 billion worth of convertible bonds to its shareholders in line with its capital build-up program.

In a statement, Equitable PCI Bank said the board approved a P5-billion to P10-billion capital build-up program to support the bank's five-year business plan from 2001 to 2005.

"The capital infusion will be implemented by way of convertible bonds to be made available to current shareholders. Details of the bond issue will be firmed up in the next few days," the bank said.

Equitable PCI Bank said details of the bond issue would be firmed up in the coming days.

SOMETHING DOESN'T SMELL RIGHT

ROMY HOMILLADA

Equitable PCI Bank directors (from left) Ferdinand Martin, Peter Go Pailian and Nilo Divina broods as stockholders' debate a capital build-up plan. Equitable PCI Bank suffered another blow on Tuesday in its bid to secure itself financially, with the Government Service Insurance System threatening not to help it recapitalize.

Equitable PCI Bank suffered another blow on Tuesday in its bid to secure itself financially, with the GSIS threatening not to help it recapitalize.

The bank is trying to build its capital base after suffering heavy withdrawals last year due to allegations during the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada that the bank had been used to maintain some of Estrada's secret accounts.

Garcia said the GSIS might not join the bank's recapitalization program due to the Go family's refusal to relinquish control of the bank.

In addition, Wilfrido Vergara, president of Equitable PCI Bank for six years and allied with the Go family, surprised shareholders at their annual meeting on Tuesday with news he wanted to resign for personal and health reasons.

The board accepted his resignation as president but retained him as a director. The board appointed Edilberto Javier, the bank's chief operating officer, as acting president.

The board elected Antonio Go as the bank's new chair to replace Peter Go Pailian and John Go as the new vice chair to lead the 15-man board.

Other directors elected to the board were Social Security System administrator and chair Vitaliano Nañagas II, SSS executives Horace Templo, Rizaldy Capulong and Luz Generoso, Government Service Insurance System general manager Winston Garcia, GSIS executive vice president Roberto Malonzo, and Frank Go, Genevieve Go, Ricardo Leong and Anthony Conway.

Reappointed were Nilo Divina as corporate secretary and Equitable PCI Bank executive vice president Romualdo Dy Tang as treasurer.

The Philippine government has a 37-percent stake in the bank, 12 percent through GSIS and 25 percent through SSS, another state-owned pension fund.

Vergara told reporters Equitable PCI Bank was projecting a P600-million net income this year assuming a capital inflow of P5 billion and as much as P1 billion if the inflow would reach P10 billion.

The bank posted a P140-million net income in the first quarter of the year, he said. *With a report from Reuters*

Benpres explores options to raise cash

BENPRES Holdings Corp. said yesterday one of its options to raise much-needed cash was to sell part of its interest in media firm ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.

Benpres chief finance officer Angel Ong told a television interview the sale would not change management of ABS-CBN as Benpres would keep majority control, or 51 percent, in the firm.

"I believe that is just one of the options open to Benpres, but there are also other possibilities like the recent merger of SkyCable and Home Cable," Ong said when asked if Benpres was selling part of its 59-percent stake in ABS-CBN.

The group's cable television unit SkyCable recently signed an initial agreement to merge with Home Cable of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

ABS-CBN, for its part, said it has not made loans or advances to Benpres.

The company was responding to inquiries from the stock exchange regarding a recent fall in ABS-CBN's share price.

"We understand that the decline has been brought about by speculations on ABS-CBN's advancing of funds to Benpres, its beneficial owner," the firm told the stock exchange in a disclosure that categorically denied making loans to its parent.

"It has been the practice of the company and the members of the Lopez group of companies to deal with its parent company, affiliates and subsidiaries on an arm's-length basis."

Benpres recovered 14 centavos, or 9.59 percent, to end at P1.60 yesterday after hitting its record intra-day trading low of P1.28 in intraday trades.

Oliver Plana, an analyst of Asiasec Equities Inc., said Benpres had fallen about 40 percent in April alone as of Tuesday and the technical rebound was not surprising.

ABS-CBN recovered to add 5.88 percent to P36. On Tuesday, it fell to its lowest close since June 1999.

"They are more transparent about it, that's better, but the group is in a financial distress beyond what people were originally expecting," said Joan Bueno-Eala, a fund manager of Bank of the Philippine Islands-Trust which handles equity funds amounting to P17 billion.

Benpres' telecommunications and water subsidiaries have been facing financial problems, with the Bayan Telecommunications Inc. unit now restructuring its debts worth $500 million.

Ong said BayanTel recently submitted a business plan and financial projection for the telecom firm to its creditors.

"The next step is for us to submit a restructuring proposal and I believe that will happen in the next 2-3 weeks," Ong said.

BayanTel missed a coupon payment of $13.5 million on its 2006 bonds, prompting Standard & Poor's to cut its long-term local and foreign currency corporate credit ratings for the firm to "selective default" from single-'B'-minus.

Apart from BayanTel, Benpres' Maynilad Water Services Inc., a joint venture with Suez Lyonnaise des Eaux, is on the verge of withdrawing from the country's largest water privatization project due to regulators' stand not to grant its application for an automatic currency adjustment.

Maynilad has suspended payments of concession fees for the water project to the government.

Maynilad president Rafael Alunan said the Benpres group did not intend to infuse more money in the firm.

Reuters

Burger King up for grabs as SMC rejects franchise

By Doris C. Dumlao

PURE Foods Corp., the food manufacturing unit of the Ayala group, has decided to put its hamburger restaurant chain, Burger King, up for grabs.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Purefoods corporate secretary Renato Marzan said the company's board of directors decided to offer the fast-food business to other groups after food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. turned it down.

The Ayala group and San Miguel are hatching a deal to sell Purefoods to San Miguel.

San Miguel, however, did not want the Burger King business included in the deal to avoid a conflict of interest. San Miguel had said it did not want to enter into any business that would compete head-on with the businesses of the customers to which it supplies processed meat.

"The board authorized the sale of the Burger King business under terms and conditions beneficial to the corporation," Marzan said.

"The board also approved the transfer of certain properties which are idle and not being used in business, to wholly owned subsidiaries, namely: PFC Properties Inc. and PF Prime Properties Inc.," he said.

The sale of the Burger King business and the consolidation of company assets is in preparation for the sale of the Ayalas' 93.26-percent stake in Purefoods to San Miguel, which is currently conducting the due diligence audit that would finalize the deal.

But since San Miguel excluded the Burger King business from the deal, the Ayala group, which appears headed toward total divestment of food-related interests, the company would now have to look for another group to buy the fast-food business.

The Philippine franchise for Burger King is held by the Philking Restaurants Development Corp., a company 49.5-percent owned by Purefoods.

Philking's original target was to open at least 15 new restaurants each year, of which each store was estimated to cost around P20 million. The company currently operates 39 restaurants, of which two were opened only this year.

Analysts said Burger King might get some interest from some groups due to positive prospects on the food business this year, especially amid the expected rise in consumerist spending linked to the elections. However, the downside was Burger King's very thin margin due to the cutthroat competition in the fast-food industry.

Other analysts said since Purefoods itself was being sold, the Ayalas might just as well auction off its food businesses lock-stock-and-barrel.

Shares end lower

(From page B1)

erated by Lopez group-owned bluechip companies early in the session on concerns over the group's financial problems faded near the close of trade, enabling some of the stocks to rebound, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index broke its 1430-point support, losing 9.71 points, or 0.7 percent, to 1425.97, in addition to a 1.2 percent loss Tuesday.

Equitable PCI Bank was among the most active stocks, down P3, or 6.3 percent, at P44.50 due to renewed wrangling among major shareholders of the country's third-largest bank during an annual meeting Tuesday, traders said.

Traders said the reluctance of the bank's shareholders to have their stakes diluted is preventing the entry of new investors.

PLDT ended lower after its mobile phone unit, Pilipino Telephone Corp., reported yesterday in its annual meeting that it expects to incur more losses this year due to high marketing costs.

"With the index breaking the 1430-point support, things don't look very positive for the market," said Equitable PCI Bank fund manager Edison Yap. "More weakness is expected."

Yap said the local bourse failed to ride on the gains of other Asian equities markets in morning trade.

"This has been an irrational market," said Yap.

Political and economic woes may also be putting pressure on Manila shares, traders said.

They said investors are still wary of what supporters of ousted leader Joseph Estrada might do to protect him from being arrested on corruption charges.

The looming global economic slowdown and its adverse effect on the Philippines' growth outlook this year is also causing concern among investors, traders said. *AP*

Two-month slump in imports . . .

(From page B1)

Japanese goods accounted for 20.7 percent of the import bill in February. They fell by 11.7 percent to $454.06 million from $514.00 million a year ago. Exports to Japan amounted to $488.04 million from $446.21 million last February.

Imports from the United States, the second biggest source with a 17.8-percent share, totaled $390.83 million in February against Philippine exports there of $761.26 million.

Republic of Korea followed as the third biggest source of imports. With payments worth $146.52 million, imports from Korea decreased by 18.9 percent from $200.55 million while revenue from exports reached $61.50 million, or a total trade value of $208.02 million and a $85.02 million trade deficit for the Philippines.

Other major sources of imports were Taiwan, $145.34 million; Singapore, $144.64 million; United Arab Emirates, $86.4 million; Malaysia, $83.38 million; Hong Kong, $74.54 million; Iran, $70.63 million, and Germany, $63.74 million. *With a report from Reuters*

DISCLOSURES

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has approved **PHILIPPINE Bank of Communications'** increase in its authorized capital stock from P6.5 billion to P14.5 billion. The bank also announced the resignation of Maurice Nubla as corporate secretary.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Pure Foods Corp.** were Jaime Zobel de Ayala, Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Renato Montemayor, Ariston Estrada Jr., Delfin Lazaro, Carlos Dominguez, Antonio Laurel and Francisco Jose Elizalde Jr.

* * *

PHILCOMSAT Holdings Corp. has announced the removal of the following directors: Benito Araneta, Lourdes Africa, Manuel Nieto Jr., Ronaldo Salonga, Edgardo Villanueva, Luis Lokin, Philip Brodett and Roberto San Jose. Elected to replace them were Carmelo Africa Jr., Victor Africa, Federico Agcaoili, Sylvia Ilusorio, Pacifico Marcelo, Francisca Benedicto, Erlinda Bildner and Rafael Poblador.

* * *

EQUITABLE PCI Bank announced the promotion of Jonathan Go from first vice president to senior vice president.

* * *

BHI Holdings Inc. has moved its annual stockholders' meeting from May 25 to Aug. 20.

* * *

CHINATRUST Commercial Bank Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 21 with the record date set for May 23. Also, the bank announced the election of Michael Chou as a new member of the board.

* * *

MULTITECH Investments Corp. has moved its annual stockholders' meeting from April 25 to Aug. 15. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, April 18, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	69.5	69.5	68.5	69.5	47,800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	47	47	43.5	44.5	40,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	216	217	212	214	127,820
Philippine National Bank	45.5	45.5	44.5	44.5	81,400
Phil. Savings Bank	29	30	29	30	27,600
Security Bank Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.25	17.5	174,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	26	26.5	26	26.5	3,300
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	53,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1220	1235	1220	1235	7,560
Sun Life Financial Serv.	960	970	955	955	5,360
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	33.5	36	33.5	36	60,800
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	50,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	655	655	650	655	5,600
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	3,500,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	24,000
Piltel	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	100,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	700	705	695	695	146,320
Ivantage Corp.	0.94	0.94	0.92	0.92	150,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.047	0.047	0.044	0.046	140,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	40	40.5	39	40.5	40,900
Manila Electric Co. B	55	55	51.5	54	1,276,900
Petron Corp.	1.8	1.86	1.78	1.86	1,504,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	10,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.08	1.12	1.08	1.12	50,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.16	1.2	1.16	1.18	4,446,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.97	0.97	0.96	0.96	540,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	2,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12.5	12.75	12.5	12.75	392,700
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	30	30	29.5	29.5	139,800
RFM Corp.	0.93	0.93	0.92	0.93	320,000
San Miguel Corp. A	46.5	46.5	46	46.5	6,500
San Miguel Corp. B	50	51.5	50	50.5	231,200
Universal Robina Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	2,511,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.59	50,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
Ayala Corp.	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.5	3,191,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.28	1.28	1.26	1.26	950,000
Alliance Global Group Inc	12.25	12.25	11.75	12	1,800
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.42	2.5	2.4	2.5	81,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	13	13	13	13	1,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.44	1.6	1.28	1.6	37,235,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	550,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.97	1.02	0.96	1.02	240,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	22.25	22.25	21	21.75	212,300
Global Equities Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
Ionics Inc.	11.25	11.75	11.25	11.75	102,100
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.86	1.9	861,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	15,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.69	0.69	300,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.48	0.49	0.47	0.47	1,250,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.43	0.43	730,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	60,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.31	0.29	0.31	450,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Macondray Plastics Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	5,000
Music Corp.	2.75	2.75	2.55	2.55	110,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	20,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.75	13	12	13	129,900
Steniel Manufacturing	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.44	0.46	0.43	0.46	1,720,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.5	1,070,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	33	36	33	35.5	674,600
Ayala Corp. Pref.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	20,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0028	0.0028	0.0026	0.0026	130,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.25	2,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.25	5,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,500
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	1,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	460	460	460	460	10
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.6	5.7	5.4	5.6	16,264,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	50,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	300,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	300,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	300,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.04	2.06	1.96	2.06	2,204,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	200,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.6	6.8	6.5	6.7	2,421,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	2,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.165	320,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	10,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	23,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	1,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	400,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	100,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	730,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	6,000,000
Pacifica	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	1,000,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	30,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.165	70,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	568,840	54,666,615.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	336,209,930	340,767,205.00
PRO	22,439,000	111,943,480.00
Mining	27,560,000	337,450.00
OIL	7,100,000	58,250.00
GRAND TOTALS:	393,877,770	507,793,000.00
	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	582.81	DOWN 9.84
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,931.25	DOWN 16.42
PRO	557.86	DOWN 1.13
Mining	1,095.71	UP 17.46
OIL	1.56	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	726.05	UP 8.37
Composite	1,425.97	DOWN 9.71

NO. OF ADVANCES: 27; NO. OF DECLINES: 36; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 31; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 94; NO. OF TRADES: 2,730

CURRENCIES

Apr. 18, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.131862	1.000000	50.2380
Japan	Yen	0.009177	0.008108	0.4022
United Kingdom	Pound	1.620713	1.431900	71.9358
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145124	0.128217	6.4414
Switzerland	Franc	0.654786	0.578503	29.0628
Canada	Dollar	0.724345	0.639959	32.1503
Singapore	Dollar	0.625856	0.552944	27.7788
Australia	Dollar	0.571821	0.505204	25.3804
Bahrain	Dinar	3.002446	2.652661	133.2644
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.301805	0.266645	13.3957
Brunei	Dollar	0.623443	0.550812	27.6717
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000104	0.000092	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.024882	0.021983	1.1044
UAE	Dirham	0.308165	0.272264	13.6780
Korea	Won	0.000855	0.000755	0.0379
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.883500	44.3853
Germany	Mark	0.511291	0.451726	22.6938
France	Franc	0.152450	0.134689	6.7665
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.400915	20.1412
Austria	Schilling	0.072672	0.064206	3.2256
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.021901	1.1003
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000456	0.0229
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.148594	7.4651
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004407	0.2214
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.00531	0.2668
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.021901	1.1003
Ireland	Punt	1.269739	1.121814	56.3577

INVITATION TO BID

All interested parties are invited to purchase, by way of sealed bids, in cash and on "as-is, where-is" basis the following standby generators:

	ITEM NO. 1	ITEM NO. 2
DESCRIPTION:	Caterpillar, Model 3512, 1563 kva (1250 kw) Capacity-80% power factor, 3-phase, 60hz, 480 volts 1800 rpm, powered by 12-cylinder diesel engine, Caterpillar V-type water cooled, skid mounted	Caterpillar, Model 3408 500 kva (400 kw) Capacity-80% power factor 3-phase, 60hz, 480 1800 rpm volts. powered by 8-cylinder diesel engine Caterpillar series 3408b V-type S/N 78203863, skid mounted
MINIMUM BID PRICE	**P2,500,000.00**	**P500,000.00**

For complete description/specification of the above machineries and other inquiries, please call:

ROMMEL O. ECHON / MANNY LAGARDE
Tel. Nos. 242-8701-24 local 766/767 or 2446790

Bidders are required to submit their bids for both gensets. All sealed bids must be addressed to the **Philippine Bank of Communications, Bidding Committee c/o Ms. Evangelina P. Samonte, SVP 4th floor PBCom Head Office Building, 214-216 Juan Luna St., Binondo, Manila.** Bidder's Deposit equivalent to 10% of the minimum bid amount in the form of cash or Manager's/Cashier's check together with the duly accomplished bid form must be enclosed in the sealed bid. Deadline for submission of the sealed bids shall be at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, **April 25, 2001**.

(PDI – April 19, 2001)

TAIAN (SUBIC) ELECTRIC, INC.

SENIOR MANAGER ACTING CONTROLLER

Male / 35-45 years of age / With MBA degree / Masters in financial management information science / Excellent in English preferably Chinese speaking / At least with 11 years experience in admin. management and relative financial and production matters / Must be excellent in business planning, internal auditing, cost accounting, and production management control system and procedures.

Qualified applicants may send their comprehensive resumé together with 2x2 pictures & other documents to **Human Resource Section, Taian (Subic) Electric Inc. SBIP-I Argonaout Hiway Cor. Braveheart St., SBFZ 2222** Tel. No. (047) 252-1668, 1669 Fax No. 252-1661 or thru SBMA Labor Center SBFZ 2222

International Co
wants to introduce new product.

Looking for

EXEC. WITH SALES AND MARKETING EXPERIENCE

Requirements:

- Fluent written and spoken English.
- 3 years + experience.
- Good local business-contacts.

Send your C.V. before 25 April 2001 to:

Unit 101/102,
104 H.V. Dela Costa Road,
Salcedo Village, Makati City

NURSES

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

FREE SEMINAR ON
SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 2001
10-11 AM, 1-2 PM, 5-6 PM
MONDAY, APRIL 30, 2001
6-7 PM & 8-9 PM

HYATT REGENCY MANILA
2702 ROXAS BOULEVARD
PASAY CITY
METRO MANILA

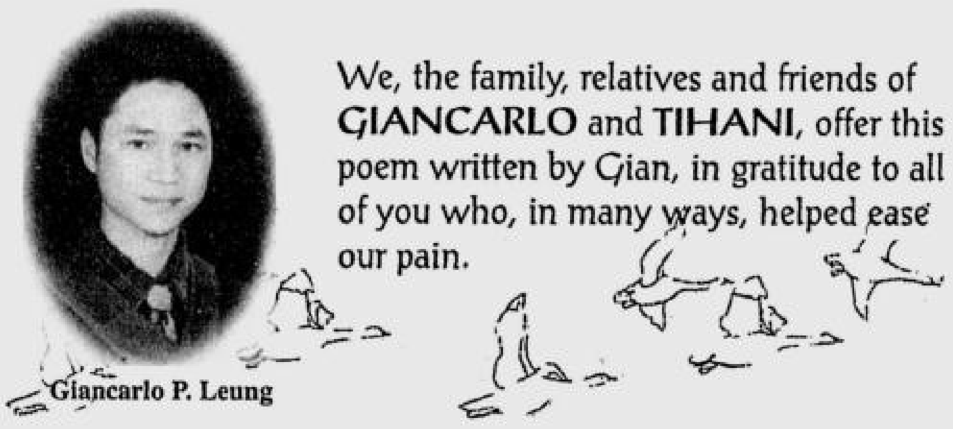
PRE-REGISTER BY APRIL 25, 2001
TO

DECLAN WALSH, MD	VIDA DELAPAZ R.N.
PH# 001-216-444-7793 (ofc.)	Telefax 253-0054 (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.)
FAX# 001-216-445-5090	(res.) Tel# 712-2835 (after 5 p.m.)
E-MAIL: cloughl@ccf.org	Mobile Phone# 0919-5833534

INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:
NAME
ADDRESS
PHONE NUMBER
Date Of Birth (DOB)
NURSING LICENSE NUMBER AND OR GSIS
Hosted by the Cleveland Clinic Foundation
Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A.

OBITUARIES

Message of Thanks

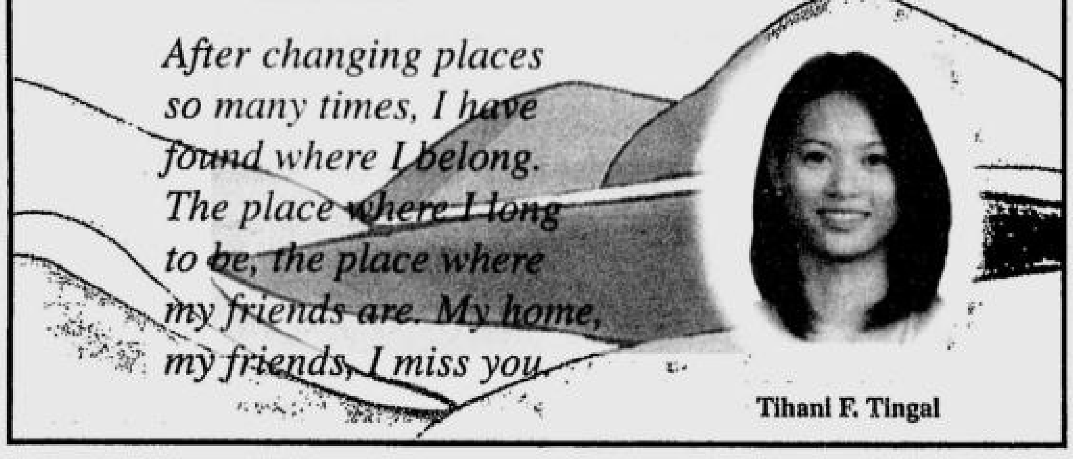


Giancarlo P. Leung

We, the family, relatives and friends of GIANCARLO and TIHANI, offer this poem written by Gian, in gratitude to all of you who, in many ways, helped ease our pain.

Home

After changing places
so many times, I have
found where I belong.
The place where I long
to be, the place where
my friends are. My home,
my friends, I miss you.



Tihani F. Tingal

Our Dearly Beloved

Benedicto S. Mariano

Peacefully joined our Lord on April 15, 2001
at the age of 86.

His loving wife **Anastacia**; children **Tessie**, **Miles**, **Letty**, **Lulu**, **Cely** and **Larry**; grandchildren; great grandchildren; sisters **Gunding** and **Maria**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel C, Arlington East, Pasig City.

Interment will be on Sunday, April 22, 2001 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Evergreen Memorial Garden.

CAPT. FORTUNATO "JINKS" A. LEVOSADA, JR.

of Bula, Camarines Sur
P.A.F. FLYING SCHOOL CLASS 1960
ATENEO DE NAGA H.S. CLASS 1954

Died in the Grace of our Lord on April 15, 2001 at the age of 63.

His bereaved wife **Marie**; children **Toots** and **Tina**, **Dennis** and **Peachy**, **France** and **Mel**; grandchildren **Rae**, **Nico**, **Anette**, **Iggi** and **Nina**; brothers and sisters **Trining** (†), **Lydia**, **Delia**, **Carling**, **Romeo**, and **Marichu**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Santuario de San Jose, East Greenhills.

Interment will be on Sunday morning, April 22, 2001 at Manila Memorial Park.

"Lord, Thank you for the many constant reminders of your presence and love through the years in my life. Amen."

SINFOROSO "JUN" V. SANCHEZ

Peacefully joined his Creator on April 17, 2001

His loving wife Vickie; children Gidget & Stanley Kho and Sean; grandchild Meggy; brothers and sisters Bading(+) & Solly(+), Nene, Ben & Pru, Aida, Weng & Nena, Tottie & Nina, and Baby & Boomba; other relatives and friends; request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the St. Alphonsus de Liguori Church, Magallanes Village. Interment will be on April 21, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Paranaque City after the 8:30 a.m. mass.

TARJETA DE AGRADECIMIENTO

*La familia **Donato** agradece profundamente a todos aquellos que nos acompañaron en nuestro dolor con su asistencia al funeral, sus ofrecimientos de la Santa Misa, y su presencia por medio de flores, tarjetas y donativos al fondo educativo BAMCREF en honor de nuestra inolvidable madre **Carmen Rivero Favis Vda. de Donato**, llamada por el Señor a la gloria el dia 27 de marzo de 2001.*

Our Dearly Beloved

Macario V. Caoile

Peacefully joined our Creator on Tuesday, April 17, 2001.

His wife **Rizalina** (†); their children **Willie** (†), **Momie** and **John Sabalvarro**, **Matit** and **Boy Zapata**, **Cary** and **Tani Caoile**, **Bert** and **Cynthia Caoile**; their grandchildren, great grandchild and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Marian Memorial Chapel, Marcos Highway, Antipolo City.

Interment will be on Saturday, April 21, 2001 at Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina, after the 10 a.m. Mass.

ESPERANZA de la PAZ SAN PEDRO

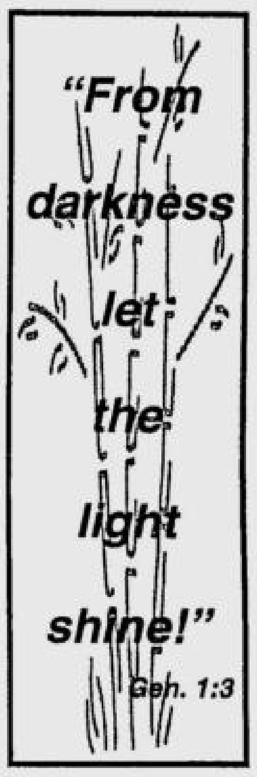
President, Women of Philippine Independent Church (WOPIC-Tipas)
Retired High School Principal · City Schools of Manila

Died in the Grace of our Lord on April 17, 2001 at the age of 90.

Her beloved husband **Gualberto**; children **Angelito** and **Teresita**, **Benedicto** and **Nancy**; grandchildren **Marissa**, **Melanie**, **Marcel-Gual** and **Eric**; nephews, nieces; other relatives and friends request the kind readers to please pray for her eternal rest.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence at 88 Labao St., Tipas, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Interment will be held on Sunday afternoon, April 22, 2001 at the St. John the Baptist Church, I.F.I. Tipas, Taguig, after the offering of a requiem Mass.



"From darkness let the light shine!"

Gen. 1:3

First Year Death Anniversary
The families of

MARCIA V. DE JESUS
PETER T. PIOPONGCO
MARLO C. PIOPONGCO

Victims of Air Philippines Flight 541
April 19, 2000

would like to extend their belated THANK YOU to all those who in one way or another condoled and sympathized with them at the time of their grief.

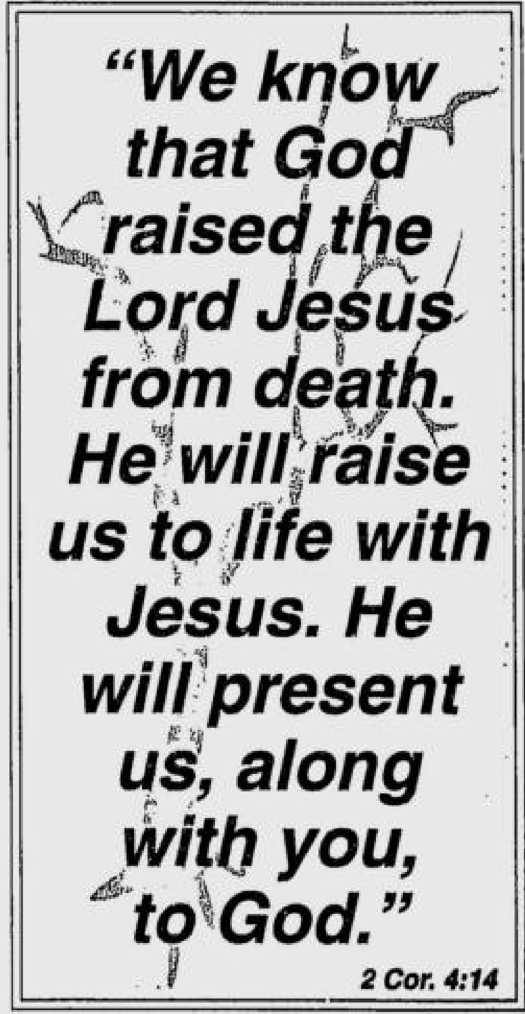
Our Dearly Beloved "Mama"

Milagros Cabrera Abella

Her husband **Miguel Paredes Abella** (†); her brothers and sisters; her children **Jaime** (†), **Miguel Jr.**, **Lourdes**, **Gregor**, **Renato**, **Imelda** and **Rowena**; grandchildren and great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Holy Family Parish Church, Roxas District, Quezon City.

Interment will be on April 21, 2001, 10:00 a.m. at Himlayang Pilipino.



"We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God."

2 Cor. 4:14

The Partners, Associates, Officers and Staff
of the Law Firm of

AGCAOILI & ASSOCIATES

mourn the passing of their Founder and Senior Partner

ANTONIO VILLASEÑOR AGCAOILI

who joined his Creator on April 17, 2001 at the age of 65.

His remains lie in state at the Capilla de San Francisco,
Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will be on 21 April 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park
after the 9:30 a.m. Mass at Capilla del Señor,
Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

We request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

We announce with deep sorrow
the demise of

ANTONIO VILLASEÑOR AGCAOILI

who peacefully joined his Creator
on April 17, 2001 at the age of 65.

His loving wife **NENA**; children **PEEWEE** and **Mabeth**, **TERRY** and **Gigi**, **PEANUTS** and **Gigi**, **CANDY** and **Frank**; grandchildren **NICOLE**, **FRANCINE**, **ENZO**, **JULIAN**, **SANDRO**, **JAIME**, **SAMANTHA** and **SOPHIA**; mother **LUDING**; and brothers and sisters request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Capilla de San Francisco, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will be on 21 April 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park after the 9:30 a.m. Mass at Capilla del Señor, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

In loving memory of

CAPT. DON "SONNY" S. SARDALLA

on the occasion of his first anniversary
of birth to eternal life

July 12, 1952 to April 19, 2000
Legazpi City, Albay-Samal, Davao

There is an appointed time for everything.
And a time for every affair under the heavens.
A time to be born, and time to die;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance.
A time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.
A time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away.
A time to be silent, and a time to speak.
A time to love, and a time to hate;
a time of war, and a time of peace.
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Patti, Iggy, Carla and Leo
request family, friends, neighbors and
colleagues to remember

Sonny
in their prayers
including all the other victims who perished
in Air Philippines Flight 541.

Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again.

2 Cor. 5:4-5

PHILAM PLANS

Aries B. Espinosa, Assistant Editor **Grace Penales**, Account Manager

Taking the lead

"Adaptable and able to see opportunities before they are even perceivable," is how Philam Plans, Inc. sees itself. Indeed, as Philam Plans celebrates its 12th anniversary, it prides itself for being remarkable in every way—from the men and women who make up its formidable employee and sales force to innovative products that are always responsive to market needs.

BY CHARLES E. BUBAN

AT THE HELM of Philam Plans' steady rise: Eliseo Dizon Jr., president and CEO; and Luie Dy Buncio, SVP for Marketing

Photos by BETOY JOHNSON

REAL success in any business is determined by one's capability to stay in the game for the long run. To do so it must possess the necessary vision and resiliency to adapt to the changing environment. "We listen to our customers, develop and enhance our products so that they meet our customers' needs and help them achieve their dreams and aspirations for their families. We take care of our sales force. We give them the means to provide for their families and benefits to ensure that they have a long, secure and fruitful career with us," explains Eliseo Dizon Jr., Philam Plans president and CEO.

Considering the over 90 companies operating within the pre-need industry, just imagine the choices a consumer has as to pre-need product offerings. Philam Plans has been fortunate to have an aggressive and loyal sales force that is seldom daunted by the challenges it faces on a daily basis. Its people also possess the speed with which they have been able to capitalize on certain opportunities oftentimes ahead of their competitors.

Since the start of the year, Philam Plans has been trying to further improve the productivity of its sales force. Philam Plans believes that since the sales force is the company's single biggest asset, it will be to everyone's advantage if they become more efficient. Effectively, the more productive an independent sales force is, the more beneficial it becomes for them financially and ultimately for the company as well.

No wonder, for the past three years, the company has maintained its top rank position in the pension and life plan categories while keeping itself among the top three in the education plan category.

"People trust us. Our name, Philam, has come to stand for trust and security for more than half a century in this country; we boast of a formidable financial backing from the American International Group, one of the most profitable and most admired companies in the world; and our people are tirelessly pursuing excellence in everything that they do," says Dizon.

As Philam Plans celebrates its 12th year today, the company has opted for a more austere yet solemn celebration. "We've realized that what's more important than drumming up our past achievements to our various publics is to buckle down and focus on the work at hand. We have a lot to attend to in order to lead the pack and that's where we intend to put our efforts," explains Luie Dy Buncio, Philam Plans SVP for Marketing.

"Juxtaposition" is Philam Plans' anniversary theme this year which is plainly defined as the act of placing unexpected combinations of colors, shapes and ideas side by side. The word also refers to the inherent factor within the company that transforms maverick viewpoints into practical business solutions. "Juxtaposition describes how we, linked by a common vision, offer innovative ideas that ultimately lead to a focused direction. We don't have to give up our individual uniqueness to be part of a cohesive and formidable team," Dy Buncio further clarifies.

Fast ascent

Philam Plans is part of the Philam Group of Companies, a subsidiary of the American International Group (AIG) in the Philippines. Other AIG affiliates include Philippine American Life and General Insurance Company, the leader in the life insurance business; Philam Care Health Systems, a pioneer in health care; Philam Savings Bank, formerly AIG Finance; Philam Insurance, a non life insurance company; Philam Assets Management, a pooled fund investment offering shares of Philam Fund and Philam Bond Fund; Philam Properties, a real estate development and property management group; the American International Underwriter Regional Deployment Center (AIU-RDC), provider of information technology support to all AIG non-life affiliates in Southeast Asia; and AIG Card, a credit card company.

Philam Plans enjoys solid backing from AIG, one of the world's most stable financial services organizations. As of 1999 figures, AIG has over $33 billion in shareholders' equity, total assets of more than $268 billion, and total life insurance in-force of more than $584 billion. Holding the record in industry profitability, AIG consistently earns the highest marks from international rating agencies and was also voted the most admired corporation in America.

As such, within a year of its launch on Oct. 12, 1989, Philam Plans landed among the country's top four pre-need companies. Five years after, Philam Plans breached the billion-peso mark

TAKING THE LEAD/ B9

Highly responsive products

IN order to maintain or even surpass its lofty status in the industry, Philam Plans Inc. promises to continue to develop and introduce products that are not only appropriate to the times but more importantly fulfill a need of the end consumer.

"We place a premium on the innovativeness of our products in the belief that we must strive for total customer satisfaction at all times. We will also strive to deliver superior service not only to our customers but more importantly to our agency sales force. Finally, we will continue to develop and build our existing distribution system and augment this via alternative avenues of getting the product to the end user," assures Luie Dy Buncio, SVP-Marketing.

At present, PPI has three main product lines, namely:

- The ***Philam Plans Gold Education Plan***, a flexible education plan that answers the financial needs for elementary, high school, or college education (even postgraduate studies).

  Unlike traditional education plans that limit the benefits to the payment of tuition, the Philam Gold Education Plan's benefits can cover books and school supplies, transportation expenses, daily allowance, and other requirements as well. The beauty of the plan lies in the fact that it grants the planholder the ability to dispose of the education fund whichever way he or she chooses since the fund is given directly to him or her.

- A brand new enhancement of the plan is its flexibility in catering to the school needs of the nominee or planholder. It can be bought by singles (unmarried individuals), couples with or without children. This is because a nominee is no longer a mandatory requirement in order to avail of the plan's benefits and graduation gift—given in an amount equivalent to the pre-need price of the chosen educational program. This latter feature virtually renders the plan cost-free! It is also not necessary for the planholder or nominee to finish his/her studies, because Philam Plans gives the graduation gift whether or not the planholder or nominee graduates from school.

- The ***Philam Plans Ultima Life Plan*** gives the planholder's family the protection they will need in the event of the planholder's death. This protection program solves the problems of family members left behind when the inevitable happens. It is the answer to every Filipino's dream of protecting his family from the financial uncertainty that a death in the family brings.

HIGHLY/ B10

The Four Elements That Make Up PHILAM CARE

PhilamCare, the leading health care organization, through the years, has been so much like *mother earth* - with its nurturing hand, growing plants and trees that sustain life.

Being a pioneer provider of affordable healthcare plans, **PhilamCare** is like a flowing *river* – nourishing the needs of different life forms.

Now, **PhilamCare**, with its ever-increasing network of full service clinics and hospitals, is spreading throughout the country and beyond, just like the caring *wind* - breathing and sustaining life near and far.

And with the combined financial muscle and vast marketing network of partners **PhilamLife**, **AIG** and the world-renowned expert in the field of managed care, **UnitedHealthcare**, together, give PhilamCare, the power to shine magnificently like the *sun* - providing energy and vitality across the universe.

PhilamCare in essence, has evolved into a holistic organization that combines the nourishing elements of the *earth*, *wind*, *water* and *sun*, not just to sustain but to enhance the health and well-being of the modern-day consumer.

All because you deserve excellent health care!

PHILAM CARE
BECAUSE YOU DESERVE EXCELLENT HEALTH CARE

7/F Philamlife Bldg., UN Avenue, Manila
Telephone 523-6002
www.philamcare.com.ph

The Philam Group of Companies offers you a full range financial services
Life and General Insurance * Property and Casualty Insurance * Health Care Management
PreNeed Plans * Savings and Mortgage * Mutual Fund Investment * Property Development
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Reaching further

TO effectively service its clients while getting new ones, Philam Plans maintains several distribution channels. These channels are the means the company employs to get its products to its clients. From among these distribution channels, its numerous agency sales force bring in the bulk of its business. These independent agency sales force comprise of individuals who visit potential clients and in the process try to convince them to purchase Philam Plans products.

Realizing that even with a huge agency sales force, it cannot hope to saturate the entire population. Philam Plans identified special alternative distribution options. These options are chiefly comprised of brokers or wholesalers that have their own sales force, targeting a specific and distinct sub-population. Recently the company set up its Islamic Marketing Operations to serve the needs of the largely untapped Muslim community. It is also strengthening its Chinese Marketing Operations and its ties with various independent brokers. It has also set up distribution channels like kiosks and mall operations. These entities augment the present agency sales force the company has.

To administer its agency sales force, Philam Plans has instituted an integrated system called Agency Management System. This system provides concrete guidelines on three important aspects: how newcomers are regularized into the sales force, how existing sales associates are retained as active members of the sales force, and finally how sales associates are promoted.

From this AMS comes the Agency Compensation System which serves as a guideline as to how members of the agency sales force are remunerated. Moreover, the ACS also talks about the benefits that its members are entitled to.

"The AMS was formulated specifically to underscore the importance of productivity and to enable our sales force to determine the level of performance that is necessary to make their career in Philam Plans an enriching one and to guide them in making the right career choices within the organization," explains Eliseo Dizon Jr., Philam Plans president and CEO.

> *The Agency Management System was formulated specifically to underscore the importance of productivity and to enable Philam Plans' sales force to determine the level of performance that is necessary to make their career in the company an enriching one and to guide them in making the right career choices within the organization.*

Photos by BETOY JOHNSON

THE numerous awards Estela Hilario's team receives every year attest to Philam Plans' effective management.

Philam Plans also provides a comprehensive benefits package for its sales force that improves as a sales associate moves up in rank. The company's agency leaders enjoy such benefits as loans, medical coverage, life insurance, pension plans through the Agency Provident Plan and others. "We give yearly commissions until the fifth year whereas most companies allow commissions only until the first or second year," Dizon adds. "These initiatives were undertaken and the benefits institutionalized precisely because we want our agency force to feel that they are important to the organization and that we appreciate their contribution to the growth of the company."

Striving to reach the top

Estela Hilario is agency manager of EC Hilario & Associates, one of Philam Plans' several agency sales force. What separates Hilario's agency from the rest is the fact that her agency is a consistent awardee of Philam Plans. For three years straight, EC Hilario and Associates ranks top five in the prestigious Award for Marketing Excellence. "Two more, and we will be elevated to the Chairman's Council and will be included to the company's Hall of Fame," explains Hilario.

To achieve this rare feat, Hilario must continuously perform excellently in terms of plan count (number of plans sold) and first payment (total amount collected from plans secured). "So far we're doing great and on schedule," adds Hilario, who is also a consistent awardee herself.

As agency manager, Hilario is in charge of several unit managers, who direct sales counselors under them. "The work is very fulfilling but it needs your commitment and perseverance. To be one of us, you must possess a nose for getting a prospective client and the talent to win them over," reveals Hilario.

Hilario's rise from the ranks is itself an effective motivator not only for her team but to those who intend to enter the sales profession. "I have been to so many jobs before I even started to seriously take this one. I worked my way here until I become an insurance agent in Philam Life, then I transferred here in Philam Plans as unit manager. Everyday is a challenge but I get on with it. Thanks to my team's collective efforts we were able to reach our monthly and annual goals," concludes Hilario.

Lakbayan 2001 Fellowship Party

winning performances

CABARET by the Visaya Sales Division

THE CAROUSEL by the Manila South Sales Division

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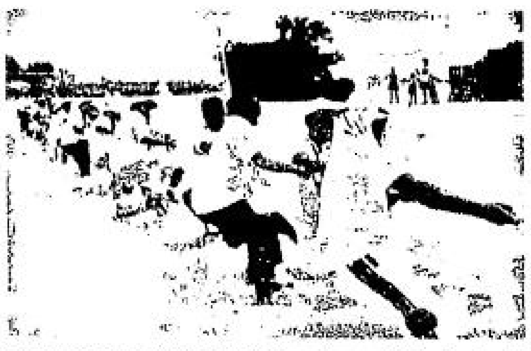
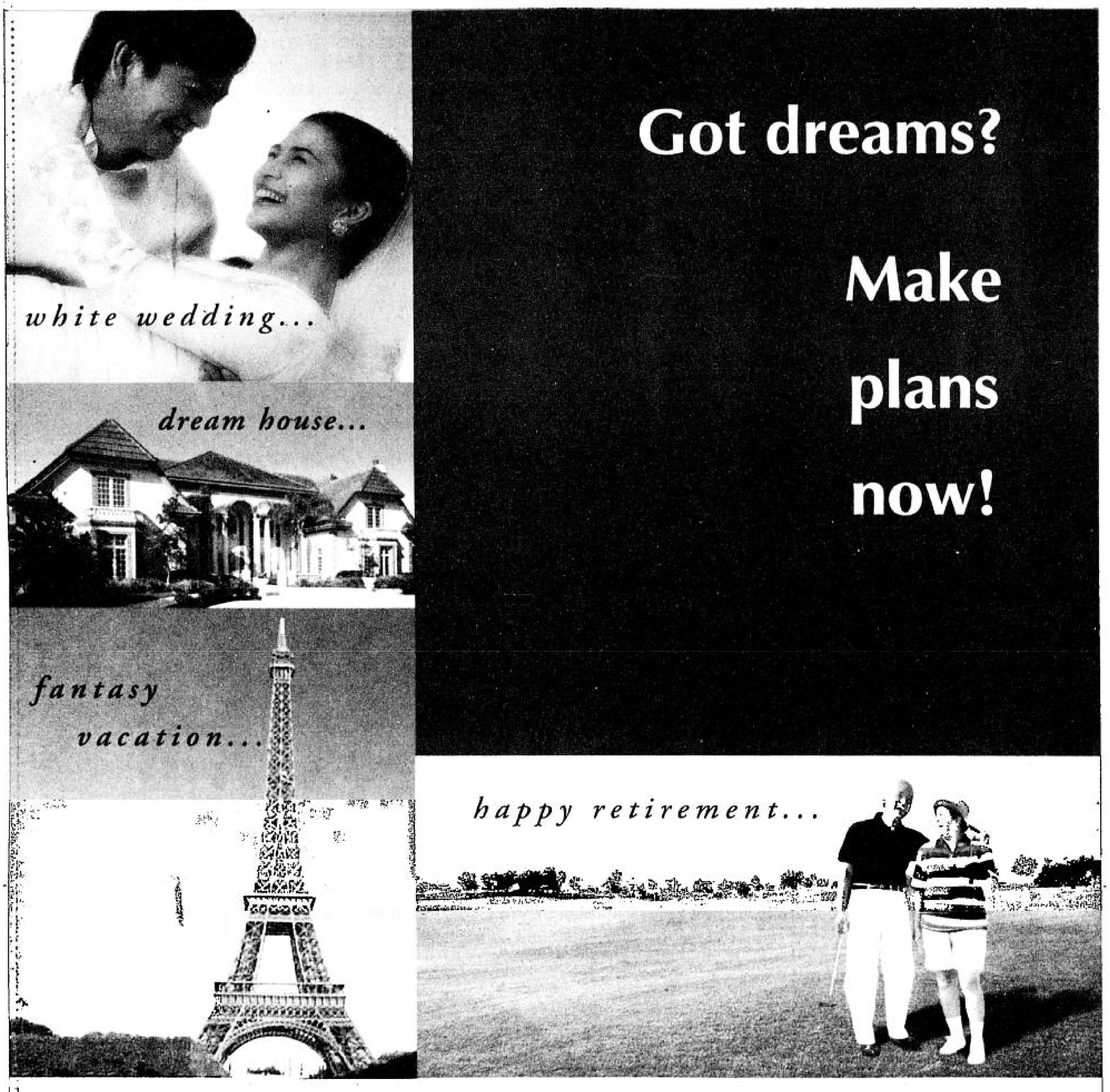
SHOWBOAT by the Manila North Sales Division



THE LUZON Sales Division show off their might in an invigorating game of tug o' war.



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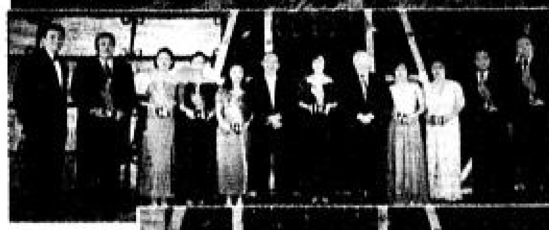
Philam Plans Lakbayan 2001

PRESIDENT'S HONOR CLUB MEMBERS FOR YEAR 2001



TOP AGENCY MANAGERS FOR 2000

Special awardees for the cross-selling and salary allotment/group business categories

CHAIRMAN'S COUNCIL MEMBERS

TOP SALES COUNSELORS FOR 2000

THE GRAND CHAMPIONS

TOP UNIT MANAGERS FOR YEAR 2000

TOP DISTRICT MANAGERS FOR 2000

Taking...

(From page B7)

with P1.7 billion in gross sales, buoyed by a 75-percent increase in sales and 105-percent increase in net profit from the previous year. This success was sustained until it captured the number one position in the industry in 1995.

Two years after, Philam Plans started its overseas operations and now sells its products to overseas Filipino workers in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Saipan, Guam, Brunei and Qatar. "We are also planning to enter the European market and the rest of the Middle East," reveals Dy Buncio.

In 1998 Philam Plans stood out as a dominant player in the pre-need industry, drawing strength from its dedicated employees and highly motivated sales force. It continued to innovate on customer-driven products and services, while investing heavily on administrative and management strategies to improve efficiency. The company's success in these areas was in evidence in the following accomplishments:

- Launching of the Philam Gold Education Plan featuring enhancements like the graduation gift which renders the plan practically cost-free
- Migration of its information systems to Ordinary Life Assurance Systems (OLAS), which allows for flexible innovations tailored to adapt to the rapidly changing needs of its customers
- 2000-compliance long before the dawn of the 3rd millennium
- ISO 9002 certification, proof of its world-class capabilities and compliance to internationally recognized quality management standards

In June 1999, Philam Plans became the first pre-need company to be a member of the Life Office Management Association (Loma), a global organization that counts among its members the leading life, health and financial services companies in the world. Loma provides expertise in different fields of financial services management through its fellowship program. The first batch of managers and officers hurdled Loma's first level exams in 2000 on their way to achieving their Fellow, Life Office Management Institute (FLMI) designation.

Recently, Philam Plans set up an Islamic Marketing Operations Department to serve the needs of the largely untapped Muslim community, while at the same time strengthening its Chinese market operations. "We realized that even with Philam Plans' huge agency sales force, we cannot hope to saturate the entire population so we have identified special alternative distribution options. These options are comprised of brokers and wholesalers that have their own sales force, targeting a specific and distinct sub population," explains Dy Buncio.

Looking ahead

Although difficult times may be ahead, Philam Plans is confident it will continue to succeed. "We know we face difficult times because our business is not impervious to global and regional macroeconomic factors that are beyond our control and tough competition from aggressive big players and upstart companies that join the fray every year," says Dizon.

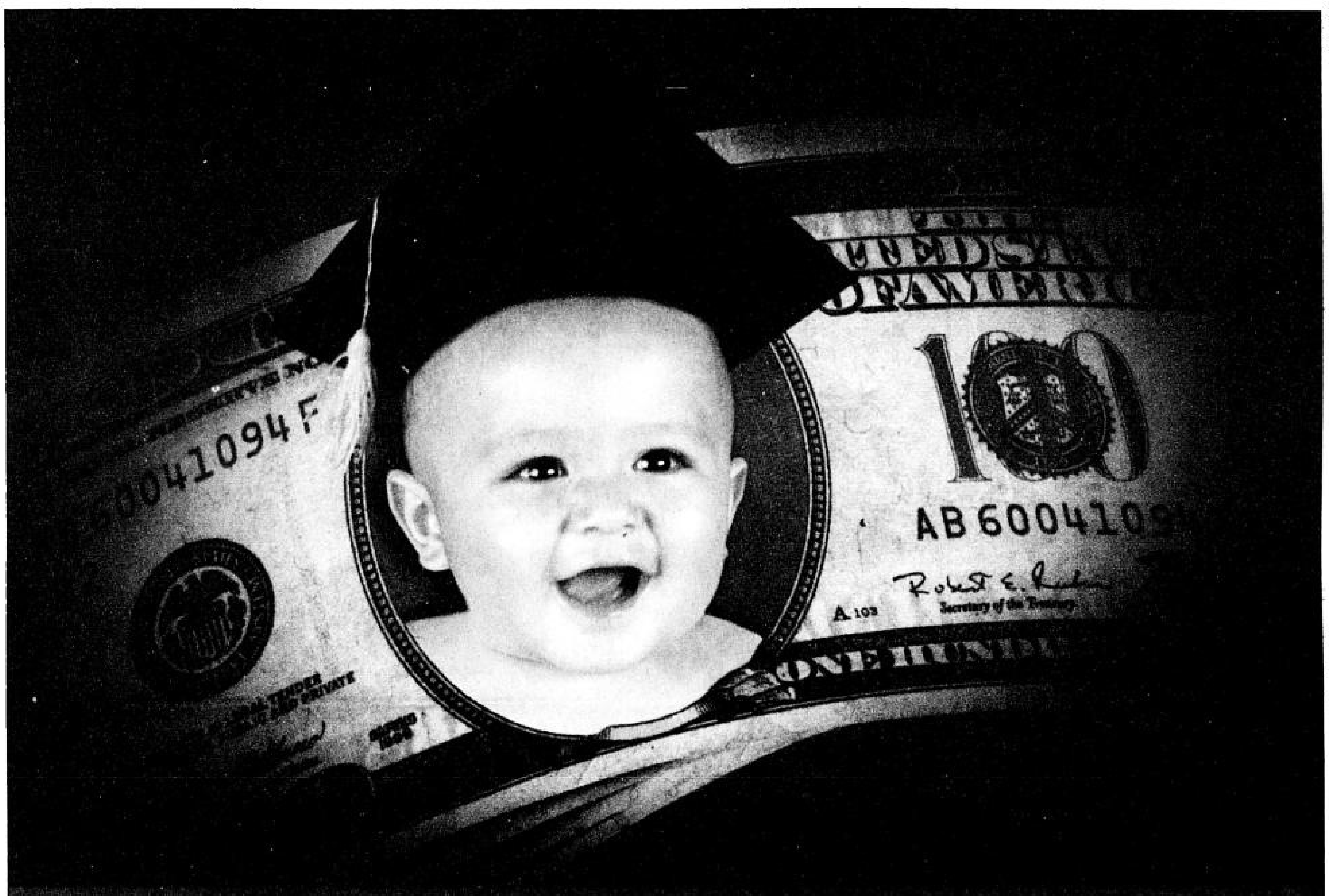
Dizon is confident though the company will reach its goal for it will remain steadfast in its commitment to its vision of leadership in the industry and in making use of the most effective and efficient means to deliver its products and services.

The Philam Plans president and CEO further adds, "What we have accomplished in the last 12 years brings us closer to our ideal. The countless obstacles we have faced in the past have not deterred us from our mission. We will continue to listen to our customers and develop products that respond to their needs. We will continue to expand our presence in the markets we have dominated and tap new ones that we know are ripe for the picking. We even keep our eyes open for potential non-traditional markets that we hope to penetrate through alternative distribution channels."

Philam Plans also knows that its success depends on the continued patronage of the Filipino family for whom they make it a mission to provide a financially secure future and a vital and fulfilling life.

By the turn of the century, it is Philam Plans' hope to see itself the undisputed leader in the pre-need industry, a leader in providing quality financial services, products and innovations, the pre-need plan of choice (in the pre-need market) and the most stable and the most profitable pre-need company in the industry.

"By then, I see a much stronger Philam Plans. We will of course strengthen our status as an industry leader by expanding our alternative and traditional distribution networks," envisions Dizon. "Because we are planting the seed of change today, we will come out a better, stronger and more efficient company in the years to come."



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PHILAM Plans proudly recognizes its first batch of Fellow, Life Management Institute (FLMI) Level 1 graduates, who have completed the first course of the Life Office Management Association (Loma) education program. The Loma is a distinguished organization whose aim is to improve the management and operations of its members through quality employee development, research, information sharing, and related products and services.

WELCOME
Delegates to Philam Plans
LAKBAYAN 2001

DELEGATES of Philam Plans Lakbayan 2001

Highly (From page B7)

- The ***Philam Plans FutureFund and Multi-Purpose Pension Plan*** is a fund-accumulation program designed to help prepare for financial independence and self-reliance during retirement. Upon the maturity of the plan, the planholder has the option to avail of the pension benefits in various ways. He can get it in one lump-sum payment, or regular fixed amounts, or the amounts may be divided within a fixed period, interests only, or he can enter into a Fund Management Agreement with the company. Through the Philam Future Fund, Filipinos can continue to build dreams in their golden years.

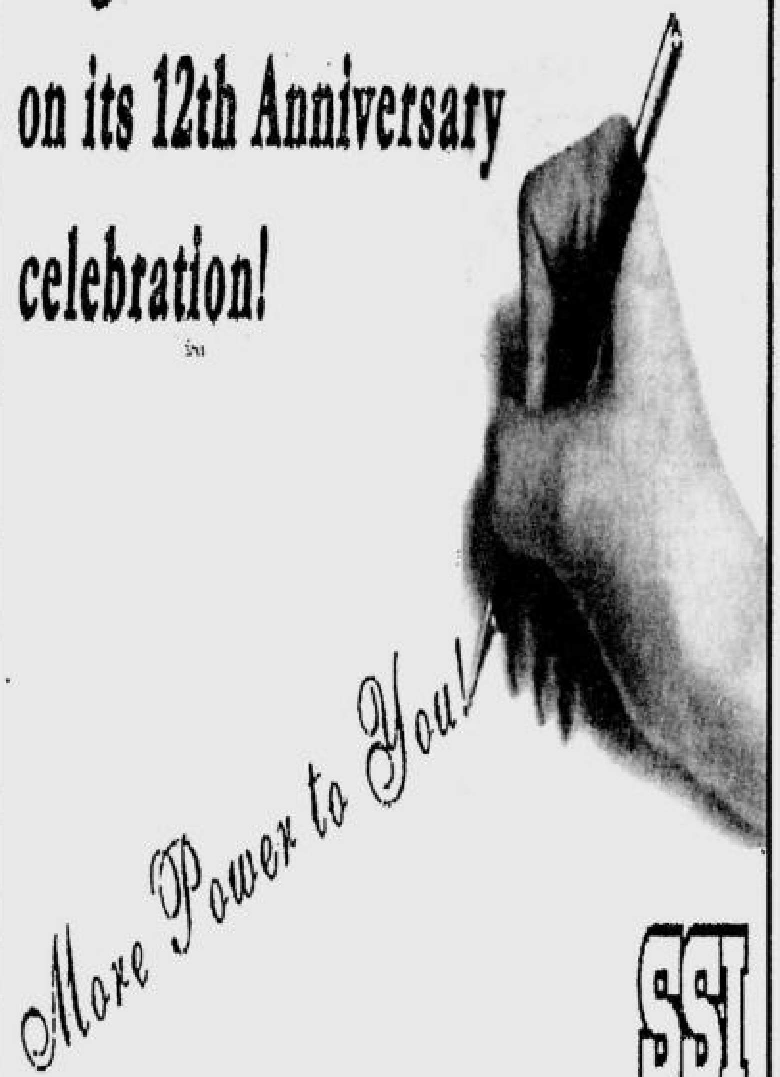
Every now and then, Philam Plans Inc. takes a look into its entire product portfolio to determine what to keep and needs to be improved. Through this assessment, it is able to identify what product needs enhancement by considering consumer needs with what PPI currently has to offer.

Last October, PPI launched the ***Philam Block Pension Plan***, which caters to large groups like associations, cooperatives, fraternal organizations, etc.

Over the years PPI has also seen the need to introduce product extensions to the three main plans it has. PPI introduced the ***Philam Wedding Package*** in 1999, which realizes its planholders' need to prepare for special occasions in their lives—not just for weddings but also for baptisms, 1st and 7th birthdays, debuts and wedding anniversaries.

In its bid to reach out to potential customers with various needs, PPI is looking forward to more product launchings and innovations this year.

Systems Standards, Inc.
congratualates PhilAm Plans
on its 12th Anniversary
celebration!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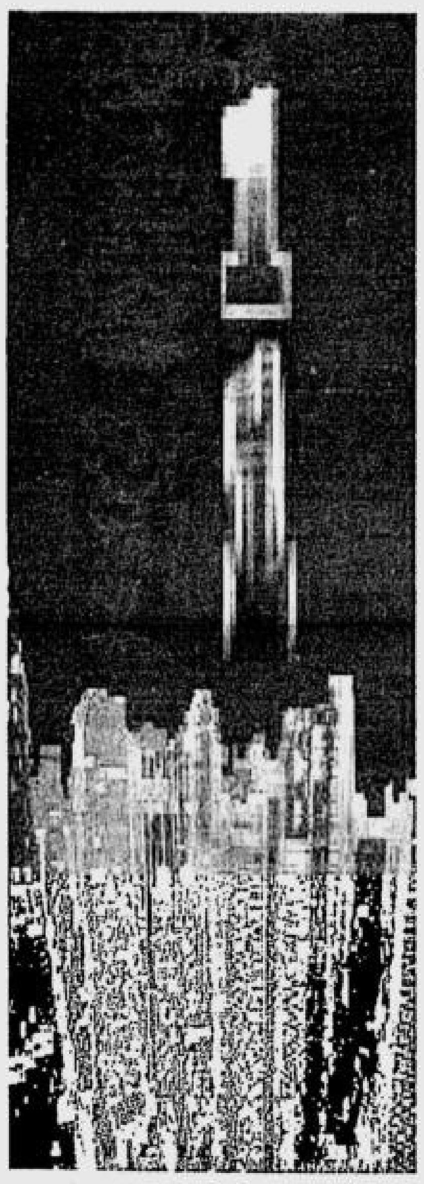

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People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

IBM-IBERPACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

IBM Philippines and Iberpacific, the Asia-Pacific subsidiary of the largest Spanish-based IT consulting firm Soluziona, recently conducted the seminar "Business Performance Analysis in the New Economy" attended by senior sales, marketing and executives from the manufacturing and distribution industries. Both firms announced a partnership to provide solutions and services on IBM's software middleware offerings specifically for the growing small and medium business (SMB) sector. The scheme combines IBM's software solution offering called OLAP-To-Go and Iberpacific's technical consulting and implementation expertise in data warehousing and business intelligence. Among the seminar's speakers on photo are (from left) Johnson Tay, IBM Asean/South Asia technical specialist-OLAP; Luis de Mena, Soluziona datawarehousing senior consultant; Francisco Castillo, Iberpacific managing consultant for business intelligence consulting, Aileen Judan-Jiao, IBM Philippines software country manager; and Gary Romualdez, IBM Philippines business partner development manager.

TOP DLSU STUDES AWARDED

The top three science and engineering students of De La Salle University were recognized in awards rites held recently at the M. Gaerlan Conservatory of the De La Salle University–Taft Avenue campus. BPI chair Jaime Zobel de Ayala was guest speaker during the awards rites. Shown in photo are (from left) Emmanuel G. Herbosa, chief operating officer for Bancassurance and BPI Science Committee member; Brother Rolando Dizon, FSC, De La Salle University president; Dr, Florencia G. Claveria, college of science dean; Donna-zea Rosete, science awardee for computer studies; Jan Arman Figueroa, science awardee; Jaime Zobel de Ayala; Faith Victory Mejor, science awardee; Veronica L. Tapia-Merk, BPI vice president for corporate communications and BPI Foundation executive director; Agnes G. Yuhico, DLSU assistant vice president for academic services; and Dr. Raymund Sison, dean DLSU college of computer studies.

OUTSTANDING ACCOUNT MANAGERS

Eastern Telecommunications Philippines, Inc. (Etpi) recently honored its outstanding account managers during the recognition program held at the Etpi head office in Makati. Shown in photo are (from left) Etpi senior sales manager Joel Soriano, AVP for corporate and major; Agnes Gervacio, sales director for corporate and major; Jojo Jimenez, outstanding account managers Philip San Luis, Josh Doctolero, Joan Estrella, Angie Navarozza, Oliver Asuncion and Sander Dela Cruz. Etpi chief operating officer Angelo C. Molato (far right) congratulates the account managers who exceeded their quota for 2000. Eastern Telecoms is the leading provider of Internet and data communications services and offers Access landline service in Manila and Caloocan.

CERTIFIED WA

ERICSSON, INFORMATICS PARTNERSHIP

Two global giants in information technology, Ericsson and Informatics, recently signed an agreement to formally launch the WAP Certified Developer Program in the Philippines, the first among Asian countries. The partnership will allow students to understand and capitalize on the newest technology that will revolutionize how Internet service is delivered and business will be conducted. Signing the agreement are president and CEO of Ericsson Robert Etteborn, and CEO of Informatics Philippines Leo Riingen. Witnessing the signing of contracts are Andrew Yalung, (extreme left) manager of Ericsson Training Center Philippines and Arnold Arañas (extreme right), Informatics Center Operations director.

Make your own MTV

HAVE you ever wondered how head-turning, heart-pounding music videos came to be? This April 21, Saturday, MTV director Robert Quebral reveals the tricks of the trade in On-Line Video Workshops' two-day lecture series "Make Your Own MTV." He starts with basic camera operation on April 21 and proceeds to more advanced MTV production techniques on April 28. The workshop will be held at the Bahay ng Alumni in the University of the Philippines. For inquiries, call 4129312 or 4127895, and look for Mavic or Malou, or e-mail online@netgazer.com.ph.

Stonegrill's free wine to grads

ALL throughout April, Stonegrill Restaurant pays tribute to the academic accomplishments of Batch 2001 with a toast of a bottle of Omni sparkling wine for free with every minimum food purchase worth P2,000. To avail, the graduate has to present a valid school ID. Promo period runs until April 30.

MHPHS class reunion

CLASS '69 of the Marcelo H. del Pilar High School, Malolos, Bulacan, will hold its annual general reunion on May 20, Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Malolos Resort Club Royale on Km. 40 MacArthur Highway corner Fausta Road, Mabolo, Malolos, Bulacan. Coordinate with any of the following officers: Mario Vergel de Dios (928-6357, 044-7950655); Yolly Sta. Maria (3736863, 431-1519); Francisco Dimagiba (4540842); Tess Buluran (044-7910757); Nida Marquez (6751296, 7361016); Antonio Fajardo (044-7911965); Ver Maclang (8925243); Felix Punzalan (044-7917355); and Abeth Robles (044-7910655).

Dorothy's kids cooking

DOROTHY'S Cooking School of Dorothy MJ Ferreria will be offering hands-on classes for children and beginners this April and May. Classes will be held at the Julius Maggi Kitchen at the Rockwell Center, Makati City. For inquiries about schedules and cooking fees, call 721-7735 from Mondays to Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. only.

Superlearning summer program

Superlearning is a learning technique hailed by Fortune 500 as the "mental technology of the future." It is being used by Golden Angels Superlearning Center at 388 Smuth Street corner Mariano Marcos Street, San Juan to help preschoolers improve their IQs. This summer the school will also cater to older kids in a package called "Summer Fun and Learn 2001." The summer program's next schedule is on May 2 to 31. Call 724-6042 or 718-2987 and enroll your child for either the 8-10 a.m. class or the 10:30 a.m.-12 noon class.

Journ courses at AIJC

The Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication (AIJC) announces the schedule of courses and teachers for the third trimester of 2000-2001: Marcelino Ballesteros, corporate communication; lawyer Michael Mastura, seminar on communication issues; Jose Pavia, community media management; Cora Arboleda, research methods; and Ramon Tuazon, information and communication technology planning. Classes start Saturday, April 21. Call the Registrar's office at 724-4564, 724-4604. Send e-mail to aijcmla@info.com.ph or visit AIJC at Unit 902 Annapolis Wilshire Plaza, 11 Annapolis Street, Greenhills, San Juan.

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BUICK, CHEVY GO RADICAL

A Rendezvous with the Avalanche

BY VERNON B. SARNE

PALM SPRINGS, Calif.—When you visit a place famous for its golf courses and villas where septuagenarians splurge their retirement loot, you expect things to be old-fashioned, traditional and time-tested. In other words, nothing that belongs to the 21st century.

But during this fair-weather week, General Motors Corp. is prepared to bend some rules, go against the flow, and mock certain conventions. The two latest vehicles that the world's No. 1 carmaker is letting us test-drive—a full month before the North American market could get its hands on them—are nothing short of iconoclastic.

The first is the Buick Rendezvous, a vehicle that may not see the light of day in the Philippines. Apart from Buick's currently strong presence in China, the brand doesn't look ready to do business in other Asian countries in the near future. You can say it's still an exclusively Yankee nameplate. But who knows? By the looks of the Rendezvous—a cross between a minivan and a sport-utility in the mold of Lexus' RX 300—it's clear Buick is about ready to shed its "doctor's car" image. And with this, perhaps an interest in global markets is coming to life.

A J.D. Power & Associates study once revealed that Buick customers had an average age of 60. It's a finding that will not sit well with any company that hopes to avoid going the way of dinosaurs in the era of webcams and palmtops. With the Rendezvous, vehicle chief engineer Ron Dershem believes they will significantly pull down that average age to 40.

How do you achieve two decades' worth of rejuvenation?

Buick did the trick by designing a crossover vehicle that combines the best features of a sedan, a minivan and an SUV. The Rendezvous was actually derived from the Pontiac Aztec platform, although it was given 4 more inches in length. The engine choice is the result of a delicate compromise between performance and fuel economy: a 3.4-liter V-6 motor pulled by 185 horses. GM's Versatrak, an innovative on-demand all-wheel drive system, finally makes its appearance in the Rendezvous, ensuring off-road readiness outside urban boundaries. Cargo space is a hungry 108.9 cubic feet, and towing capacity is at a brawny 3,500 pounds. Of course, it doesn't hurt that Buick is selling youthful accessories for the Rendezvous like a mountain bike rack, a kayak carrier, and a ski rack.

AVALANCHE

RENDEZVOUS

Features that clearly represent a call to be adventurous and juvenile.

Finally, Buick priced it such that buyers as young as 35 can afford it. The front-wheel Rendezvous will sell for $25,500, while the all-wheel-drive version will go for $28,000. That's easily $7,000 cheaper than either the RX 300 or the Acura MDX.

Buick is producing the Rendezvous in the same Mexico plant that assembles the Aztec. A modest 40,000 units are expected to roll off in 2001, all for the US and Canadian markets. Shipment to dealers begins middle of May.

The toast among the motoring journalists, however, is the second vehicle: the SUV-cum-pickup Chevrolet Avalanche. Think Ford Explorer Sport Trac—only bigger and much more versatile. Bigger because it is based on the full-size Suburban, sharing as much as 85 percent of the sport-ute's components. And more versatile because it features the much-hyped midgate. It's also very ruggedly handsome, flaunting an aggressive grille and muscular fender flares.

The chief selling point of the Avalanche, which brand manager Ed Schoener likes to call "the ultimate utility vehicle," is its Convert-a-Cab System featuring the midgate design. With the entire mid-section panel (yes, together with the backlite) collapsing to the rear cabin floor, the 5.3-inch cargo bed becomes a capacious 8.1-inch storage area. That's by far the longest cargo bed in its class.

The Avalanche is powered by GM's vaunted 5.3-liter Vortec V-8 engine that hauls the vehicle with 285 hp and 325 lb-ft of torque.

Also manufactured in Mexico, the Avalanche will see 100,000 production units for 2001. The Z71 trim (4x4) is priced at $34,000, while the Z66 (4x2) will fly off the showrooms for $31,000. It is highly doubtful though if GM will ship some units to the Philippines this year. With the American market as the top priority, the soonest we can hope to see one roaming Manila streets would be late next year.

The GM guys from Detroit truly feel that they will hit the jackpot with the Buick Rendezvous and even more so with the Chevrolet Avalanche. So much so that they had the gall to disturb the idyllic setting of Palm Springs just to show off their two new radical movers.

Judging from the way the American automotive media nodded their heads and beamed their smiles, it looks like GM will have no trouble endorsing their products to their target markets.

How to survive the SLEX

(Conclusion)

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

LAST week, this column offered advice on how to survive the busiest stretch of the southbound side of the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX), the Nichols-to-Alabang portion. The tips were based on this columnist's 10 years of surviving the SLEX five days a week without a mishap. Today's tips focus on how to navigate the Alabang-to-Nichols segment of the SLEX's northbound side without wasting one's time or losing one's cool, even during the morning rush hour.

Keep in mind that in this country, the fast or leftmost lane is almost always hogged by slow drivers while the rightmost lane, which in civilized parts of the world is considered the slow lane, is often used as the fast lane by experienced motorists. You can blame this phenomenon partly on the selective or nonenforcement of the most basic traffic safety rules by our traffic authorities, especially the organization that mismanages the Luzon expressways—but that's another story altogether.

On the Alabang-to-Nichols section of the SLEX, traffic is usually slowest from Alabang to Bicutan. Once you get past the Bicutan exit ramp, traffic flow normally frees up until you reach the approach to the C-5 exit ramp, which consists of one overcrowded lane for toll-paying motorists and one rarely used E-Pass lane. Past the C-5 exit, traffic speeds up anew but only briefly, as you close the distance to the Nichols toll plaza and have to line up to pay.

From Alabang to Sucat, the rightmost lane, needless to say, is the fast lane. Stick to the rightmost lane, although traffic on the other lanes seems to move faster now and then. As you get nearer the one-kilometer marker to the Sucat exit, traffic on the rightmost lane will surge ahead of the other lanes—unless there's a stalled vehicle or accident blocking the lane. Don't be put off by the yellow demarcation line on the road's surface warning that the Sucat exit approach is nearing, since this yellow line begins well before the one-kilometer marker.

But once you see the 500-meter sign overhead, start looking in your left side and rearview mirrors more often for a break in the traffic flow on the middle lane that will allow you to scoot into the middle lane. A slow driver lagging way behind the vehicle in front of him/her will give you this opportunity. Timing is of the essence because if you're tardy or timid, you'll be trapped in the long queue of smoke-belching buses (and cargo trucks, if the truck ban hours are over) lining up to exit at Sucat.

Once on the middle lane, you may have to work your way to the leftmost lane to avoid the convergence of behemoth vehicles squeezing into the Sucat exit ramp. Stay on the middle or leftmost lane until you're safely past the Sucat entry ramp and the vehicles merging into the mainstream traffic therefrom. Then, using your turn signal judiciously, work your way back to the rightmost lane.

Don't be alarmed by signs overhead declaring that this lane is only for vehicles entering the Skyway. Traffic on this lane, the rightmost lane, eventually surges ahead of the other lanes if there's no disabled vehicle or accident obstructing traffic flow. Keep your eye peeled for the yellow line on the road's surface indicating that the entry ramp to the Skyway is almost near. Once you see the yellow line, begin watching your left and rearview mirrors again for a chance to move to the middle lane. For the sake of your tires, it's advisable to make your move before little, flat cat's eyes start appearing on the yellow line. Closer to the Skyway's entry ramp, the cat's eyes get bigger and sharper, thus more liable to damage your tires.

Stay on the middle lane until you get past the Skyway's entry ramp and the Bicutan exit, then go back to the rightmost lane unless you see it being clogged by slow-moving vehicles. From the Bicutan exit all the way to the Nichols toll plaza, you have to play it by ear, using whichever lane has less snail-paced vehicles. But when the Nichols toll plaza is in sight, move to the leftmost lane so that you can enter the two-lane fork on the left leading to the toll booths ahead that are not used by passenger buses, cargo trucks and container vans. The queues at these toll booths are usually shorter.

Many times, even when it is not the rush hour, such as 11 a.m., 10 p.m. or 12 midnight, and even when there is no stalled vehicle or accident impeding traffic flow, traffic on the SLEX is bumper-to-bumper and crawling. The only explanation for it is that there are just too many cars and too many people in Metro Manila.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: If we quit voting, will they all go away?

* * *

E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@pacific.net.ph

Motorola technology innovations keep competition fierce on the race track

IN A SPORT where after two hours of grueling competition a tenth of a second can mean the difference between victory and defeat, teams competing in the CART FedEx Championship Series look for every advantage to give them the winning edge. These teams, including the No. 39 Team Motorola and driver Michael Andretti, rely on new technologies developed by Motorola, a leading supplier of automotive electronics.

Motorola is a team, event and series sponsor of the CART FedEx Championship Series, but more important, many professional drivers and teams around the world depend on the Motorola Digital DNA embedded electronic solutions and Motorola communication solutions to help them in their battle for the checkered flag. Motorola designs sophisticated engine management systems and advanced semiconductor-based solutions developed specifically for Honda-powered Champ Cars.

"The increasing level of racing competitiveness, coupled with even further demands for safety, means we have got to provide the best communication equipment out there," said Gary Grube, Motorola's radio business chief technology officer. "The racing industry now uses the same vital communication systems that we provide to our public safety customers."

Motorola Digital DNA solutions such as the Engine Control Unit (ECU) bring a new level of intelligence to auto racing. The ECU's ability to monitor and process millions of instructions per second maximizes the driveability of race cars by improving real-time throttle response, ignition timing, fuel delivery and automatic speed limit control on pit road. In addition, the grueling environment of intense heat and high vibration requires extreme ruggedness in the electronics design, best showcased in the No. 39 Team Motorola Honda-Reynard Champ Car.

"A major contributor to the driveability of a car is how the engine is managed by the ECU," said Andretti, the winningest active driver in CART. "On the race track, it is critical for me to have confidence in the throttle response and acceleration out of the corners so that I can maximize the performance of the car and my own performance. That confidence will help you gain tenths of seconds around the race track and those precious seconds give you the lead over your competition."

In addition to embedded engine electronics, Motorola provides radio communications for all aspects of the CART FedEx Championship Series, which this year rolled off in Mexico. Two-way radios provide an important communication link for a race team's pit-to-driver communications, CART's race operations, safety and medical officials and race event operators. A typical race weekend employs the use of 3,000 radios representing thousands of combined channels of communication. This complex web of communication travels a demanding schedule of 21 races in seven countries on four continents over a nine-month season.

Motorola uses auto racing as a "field laboratory" to receive feedback from extreme radio users, such as Champ Car teams. This approach allows Motorola to identify challenges, create solutions and develop new and improved technology that often crosses over from consumer and industrial applications to auto racing.

Motorola's involvement in auto racing dates back to 1937, when the company first sponsored a car competing at the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Two-way radio communications became standard in open-wheel racing in 1969, but Motorola engineers had been experimenting with them as early as 1933.

Motorola Inc. is a global leader in providing integrated communications solutions and embedded electronics solutions. Sales in 2000 amounted to $37.6 billion.

MORE HOUSES FOR THE HOMELESS

Caltex Philippines Inc. reaffirms its commitment to build more houses for the homeless during the contract signing with Habitat for Humanity Philippines Foundation at the Caltex office in Makati City. Caltex and the HFHPF are in their third year of fruitful partnership in building shelter for indigent families in various Habitat build sites nationwide. Signing the sponsorship agreement are Caltex country chair Nicholas Florio, right, and HFHPF chair Tony Ng.

THE TEAM: From SUV to motorboat

A seven-woman . . . (From page B13)

It also helped that the Ford Expedition's owner's guide supplement gave out bits of info like emergency maneuvers for amateur SUV drivers like us. Especially useful was if one's vehicle goes off the edge of the pavement, a driver has to slow down. Also, we were instructed to avoid severe brake application. One more tip was to ease the vehicle back on to the pavement only after reducing the speed. Drivers are discouraged from turning the steering wheel too sharply while returning to the paved road.

Our Northern Expedition was over in Manila Easter Sunday. Thanks to Ford's tips, to the women test-drivers, the navigators, and the visual blockbuster that is Pagudpud.

Traffic . . . (From page B14)

DECS said that the preschool curriculum and other subjects of special children have also been integrated with subjects related to traffic awareness. As early as preschool, children have been taught basic traffic light signals and its meanings, and the proper way of crossing roads.

Land Transportation Office education chief Daisy Jacobo said in an earlier interview that the DECS had already integrated traffic education awareness in Grade 4, 5 and 6 textbooks.

Meanwhile, a new legislation discouraging the use of cellular phones by drivers has been strongly lobbied in the interest of road and public safety.

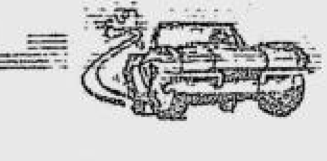
In a statement sent by Rep. Ernesto Herrera, the rise in road accidents attributed to drivers using cellular phones has urged several jurisdictions in the United States and even local governments in Metro Manila to restrict or totally ban the use of mobile phones while driving.

Local cellular phone mobile operators are also urged to encourage road safety awareness among its clients.

Tessa R. Salazar

Isuzu's Sheila happy now; ravin' for RAV 4

FULL TANK



Al S. Mendoza

TODAY is Erap's birthday. Happy birthday, Erap.

And to all the celebrators today, happy birthday, too.

* * *

A birthday is a person's most cherished day. It shouldn't be taken for granted.

I don't know, but my parents never seemed to have treated birthdays as big deal. Maybe I am wrong. Maybe they were just then too busy attending to the needs of everybody: We were 9 siblings—7 boys, 2 girls. Hardly did they observe with fanfare any of their child's birthdays. No gifts. No pancit. Mother would just tell me, "Go to church, sonny. It's your birthday. Happy birthday." Not even a kiss on the cheek—after I had kissed her hand coming home from the church.

Only when I got married did I start receiving birthday cards from my mother.

But never did I take offense. I'm sure my mother—may her soul rest in peace—had her own reason/s. Always, she had a way with things.

Consider: I never knew the date of my parents' wedding day. They never told us.

But the day I got married was the day they got married. I came to know about it by accident: When my parents celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. That was almost a decade already after I got married.

Even their golden wedding anniversary was no big deal. They didn't repeat their vows. They went to church quietly, came back to the house quietly. There was no party, but I sent them lechon anyway. A special one ordered in Manila and sent by special delivery to their abode in Pangasinan. In return, I got a note from my mother: "Thank you my dear son for remembering. And happy wedding anniversary, too."

I did not remember. I was only told about it by a younger brother who lived with them in the province.

Again, happy birthday, both to Erap and to all the members of Club 419.

Sinner or saint, Erap deserves a break.

* * *

The new Toyota RAV 4 is definitely the best in its class. Massive in appearance, it drives almost effortlessly. Light as a feather. Very, very gentle suspensions. No thuds. And, as in most Toyota models, the RAV 4 is a gas miser.

When a retired UP Diliman professor wanted to know if buying one as a gift for his wife would be a nice idea, I said, "Go ahead, Sir, make her day."

"Will I fall in line if I buy one now?" he asked. "I intend to bring it to my beach house in Agoo (La Union) the minute I bought one."

Alas, the "falling in line" query, I have no answer.

Your call, Ariel DJ?

* * *

And now, the letter of the week:

"We would like to clarify some points raised in your Full Tank column of April 5 regarding the case of Ms Sheila Tolentino (of Isuzu) against our company, La Savoie Development Corp., regarding the release of her lot title.

"We have already released the title on Monday, April 2, 2001. The title was released well ahead of the deadline period set by Pag-Ibig, which is on May 2001. We would like to attest to the release of the P50,000 by Pag-Ibig, which is actually intended for La Savoie to cover their unpaid balance. It is our company, which was disadvantaged by this incident and not Ms Tolentino because since January 2001, Ms Tolentino already stopped paying for her monthly amortization.

"As to why other buyers were given their titles ahead of Ms Tolentino, the titles are released depending on Pag-Ibig's processing of Notice of Loan Approval and Letter of Guaranty.

"We also would like to clarify that the title sold to Ms Tolentino was not mortgaged in a bank. Her Transfer Certificate of Title (TCT) would show that there is no annotation of mortgage at the bank.

"Finally, after a thorough review of the logbook of my incoming calls, I noticed that I did not receive any call from you nor from the Philippine Daily Inquirer regarding Ms Tolentino's case. Even if I am out of the office, there will always be department managers who will attend to your concerns and queries. Should there be anything that needs to be facilitated, we are at all times ready to accommodate such requests.

"Although we have received a call from Ms Tolentino in the afternoon of April 2, thanking our finance manager for the release of her title, we hope that you will also publish this letter in the interest of balanced reporting.

"Thank you and more power!

"Sincerely yours,
Jeanne G. Menguito
La Savoie Development Corp."

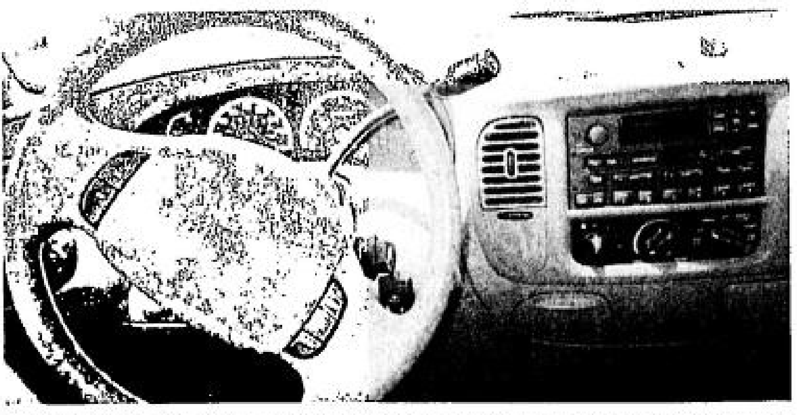
So there. As the cliché goes, "All's well that ends well."

* * *

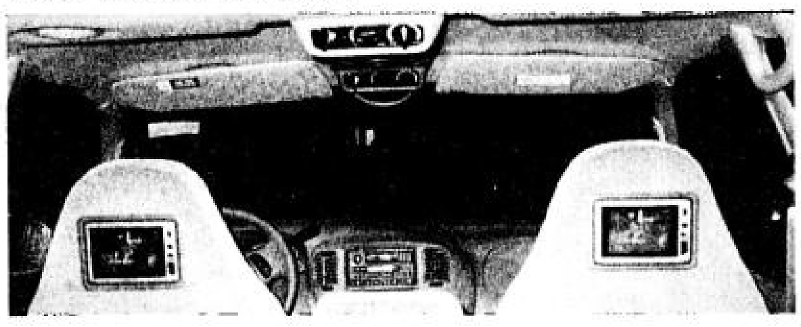
QUOTE ME. Buckle up. It's the law.

A seven-woman Northern Expedition

TEXT AND PHOTOS
BY TESSA R. SALAZAR



CONTROL PANEL: With adjustable pedals, adjustable steering wheel, wide visuals, instrument panel dimmer switch, temperature gauge and directional gauge.



DRIVE-IN MOVIE: With the traffic jam at the north expressway, the VCD was a welcome sight for the team.

UNDER THE TREE: The Expedition on the shoreline of Pagudpud beach resort at Villa Del Mar.

THE MONSTROUS waves of Pagudpud beach at the northernmost part of Luzon literally brought us to our knees, stripped off our tops, and rolled us like pins in a bowling alley. On shore, one of us even had an unplanned yet heartwarming visit with her grandma and a glimpse of a childhood playfield in the "dying" Cape Bojeador Lighthouse.

Our group had a chance to do the "visita Iglesia" at the famed churches of Paoay and its bell tower; and the grandiose Sta. Monica Church and Convent at Sarrat. There were eerie visits to the Marcos Mausoleum and Museum and a stroll in the "Malacañang Palace of the North," which overlooked Paoay Lake.

We capped our northern expedition walking through time in the centuries-old houses of Vigan.

Our seven-woman group embarked on the 1,500-km trip to bring the Ford Expedition 2001 from Manila to the tourist spots of picturesque Ilocos province.

In anticipation of a long drive, we did a thorough "pre-flight" check at the Total service station near the office. We had the chance to gawk in awe at the huge V8 engine when the hood was opened.

We met the Holy Week exodus at the north expressway. It was 5:30 a.m. of April 12. We wove through traffic—"Friends" keeping us company on the inline VCD player (conveniently placed at the back of the front seats, at the eye level of the rear passengers). The THX-like sound system kept us oblivious of the grumbling of the traffic outside. The front occupants (the driver and navigator), however, were green with envy as the back passengers watched and laughed.

But the VCD showed its moody moments, too during our second day of driving along the Pagudpud area. Perhaps too exasperated by the summer heat, the video disc player refused to play—no matter what button we pushed.

The automatic transmission, the eye-friendly instrument panel (with the dimmer switch), the adjustable pedals and the adjustable steering wheel all made driving in long-drawn-out traffic conditions easier. The style made admiring glances but never the intimidating appeal of a Cheateau Wagon E150.

Surprisingly, we consumed only P5,000 worth of unleaded gasoline on the 1,500-km route from Manila to Pagudpud and vice versa.

The team

At the helm of the steering wheel during the initial stages of our escape was yours truly. The "Schucy" driver, however, turned out to be no other than our editorial assistant Tin-Tin Ang who wove through buses and trucks smoothly and decisively like a true pro.

A SEVEN-WOMAN/p.B12

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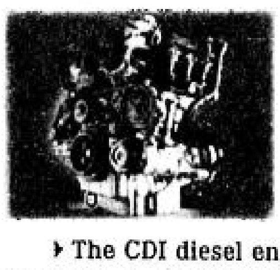

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MOTORING

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

Traffic education in schools to reduce accidents

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communication's recent proposal to include traffic education in the school curriculum could save the most vulnerable pedestrians—children.

DOTC officials will be coordinating with the Department of Education, Culture and Sports in arming the children with the basic knowledge on road safety, traffic rules and regulations via the school curriculum.

Drunk driving was cited as one of the key factors present in most vehicular accidents. A recent survey by the Population Institute of the University of the Philippines showed 4.1 million adolescent males and an additional 1.1 million adolescent females drink alcohol, or roughly six out of 10 Filipino teeners. Rep. Eduardo Gullas is supporting the move of the DOTC to include traffic education in the school curriculum. He added that drunk driving should be discouraged even as early as when a youngster is allowed to drive.

DECS, however, notes that traffic safety awareness has long been part of the curriculum—in integrated subjects such as Sibika and Kultura. The Special Education of the Bureau of Elementary School of the

TRAFFIC/p.B12

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	M/T	P567,500	0%	P47,292
Grand Vitara 2.5L	A/T	P665,000	0%	P55,417
	M/T	P640,000	0%	P53,334

Model		Downpayment 20%	Monthly 72-months
Vitara Standard	A/T	P159,000	P14,798
	M/T	P150,000	P13,916
Vitara Plus	A/T	P167,400	P15,523
	M/T	P158,400	P14,642
Grand Vitara 2.0L	A/T	P235,000	P21,805
	M/T	P227,000	P21,022
Grand Vitara 2.5L	A/T	P266,000	P24,600
	M/T	P256,000	P23,619

PROMO PERIOD: APRIL 2-30, 2001
Per DTI-NCR permit number 0922 Series of 2001

- Big discounts for cash buyers
- Other monthly plans for 12-72 months available
- Financing rates and terms subject to BPI FAMILY BANK approval

Suzuki's Grand Financing Scheme also comes with freebies.
(Exclusively for Grand Vitara models)
Fog Lamps•Window Visors•Muffler Extension plus Rear Upper Spoiler (for 2.5L only)
PROMO EXTENDED until April 30, 2001*
Per DTI-NCR permit number 0087 Series of 2001
*Approved by DTI-NCR

FULL FRAME 4x4
2WD ⟷ 4WD DRIVE SELECT 4x4

Visit your nearest Suzuki dealer for more information regarding these grand deals.
(GM Autoworld dealers - Grand Vitara models only)
*Specifications shown in photo may vary slightly from actual unit.

SUZUKI

DEALERS
Metro Manila
PILHINO SALES CORP.
Mandaluyong City
Tel. Nos. 634-3451 to 57
PILIPINAS TRANSPORT INDUSTRIES, INC. - LAS PIÑAS
Las Piñas City
Tel. Nos. 871-3879 / 80/ 871-3893
GM AUTOWORLD - Makati
Makati City
Tel. Nos. 843-0217 to 20 / 814-0803 / 814-0836
GM AUTOWORLD - Quezon Avenue
Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 374-1260 to 60 / 382-8001

Luzon
AMIANAN MOTORS
Rosario, La Union
Tel. Nos. (072) 712-8881 to 84
Baguio City
Tel. Nos. (074) 300-8882 to 83
San Fernando
Tel. Nos. (072) 700-8882 to 83
Laoag
Tel. Nos. (077) 781-8882 to 83
CHEERS TRADESTAR, INC.
Santiago City
Tel. Nos. (078) 682-7451 / (078) 682-8143 / (078) 682-8080
GM AUTOWORLD - Pampanga
San Fernando, Pampanga
Tel. No. (045) 963-0686
LISAM MOTORS
Naga City
Tel. Nos. (054) 472-3577 / (054) 472-6950

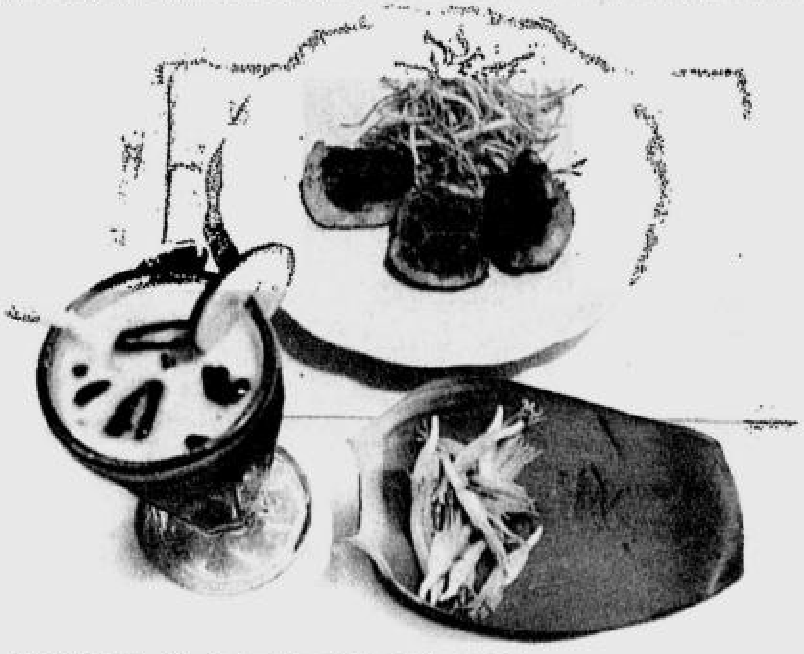
Visayas
AFE MOTOR SALES CORP.
Tacloban City
Tel. Nos. (053) 321-2498 / (053) 325-5609
AUTOMALL MOTORS SALES
Bacolod City
Tel. Nos. (034) 435-1102 / (034) 435-1308
ILOILO CAR CORP.
Iloilo City
Tel. Nos. (033) 320-2248 / (033) 320-2064 / (033) 508-5878
SAIKOH MOTOR SALES, INC.
Mandaue City
Tel. Nos. (032) 346-3602 to 06 / (032) 346-3110 / (032) 344-0902

Mindanao
ANFLO MOTOR CORP.
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. No. (088) 227-26357
ARCEF MARKETING, INC.
Zamboanga City
Tel. Nos. (062) 991-1492 / (062) 991-1126
MOTORMALL DAVAO CORP.
Davao City
Tel. Nos. (082) 235-0165 / (082) 234-0300

LIFESTYLE Tastes
CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

C'mon, let's eat!

By Marge C. Enriquez
Photos by Chito Vecina
Pictorial direction by Albert Avellana



PANDESAL Panini with meat and sweet potato filling and camote chips with iced tea made the old-fashioned way—from tea bags and *calamansi*

If the cuisine is Kapampangan and evokes memories of home, you can change that to 'let's pig out' and you won't hear complaints from Mangan's owners

HAVING grown up in Pampanga, which is famous for its cuisine, entrepreneurs Ricardo Ocampo and Maritel Nievera are today given to savoring memories of how their lives revolved around the dining table.

Because some dishes took hours or a day to prepare, the walls of the

C'MON/ p.C6

Beauty starts with a hot shower bath.
P705.17 x 12
New Ariva Cristina
Fully Automatic Water Heater with Built-In ELCB
FREE Installation!
PLDT 724-59-07
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WATER HEATERS

Affordable CATERER with Excellent QUALITY & SERVICE
ROAST BEEF/AUSTRALIAN
Roast Calf, Chicken Ballotine, Roasted Pig Lechon, Fish Fillet Meuniere, Lasagna, Arroz Valenciana, Salad Bar, two Desserts, with Tables, Chairs, Waiter Services, Plates, Cutlery, etc.
Price range P350 to P495 + 10% S.C.
We cater within your budget
FOOD ORDER AVAILABLE
(small/big Parties) Black Angus Roast Beef, Special Lengua, Lechon Baboy All Sizes, US Roast Turkey, Italian Pasta, Chinese Noodles, Paella, Relleno, Japanese Dishes, Pack Lunch Boxes, etc.
Call Aurelio's Catering
Tel. No. 726-7321 or 726-9329 • Cell. No. 0917-5265217
Cocktails, Wedding, Children Menu available

If you think your limp, thinning hair is beyond help,
MAKE IT LUSH AGAIN AT SVENSON!
Thinning and falling hair can turn your lush locks into limp, wispy strands. If shampoos and conditioners can't solve your hair-loss problem, don't think that you're beyond help already. Come to Svenson International for the most effective solutions to stop hair loss and restore thickness to your hair. Tricho-DHT Inhibitor is the solution to counteract Dihydrotestosterone (DHT), a converted hormone that is proven to be the main culprit of hair loss among men but is also apparent among women. DHT builds up in the hair follicles causing thinner strands until nothing regrows. Along with this treatment, Svenson also offers Laser Hair Cell Accelerator. A special soft laser is applied directly on your scalp and acts like a light vitamin to increase the amount of hair cells. It helps to prolong the life of these cells so you can get longer, stronger-growing hair. When combined, these treatments are proven to combat hair loss and accelerate the process of hair regrowth.
If you're losing hair, don't lose hope. Come to Svenson now and turn your hair from limp to lush!
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Solid Mills Bldg., dela Rosa St.
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BINONDO
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243-0128 • 244-8913
ALABANG
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842-1389 • 842-4181
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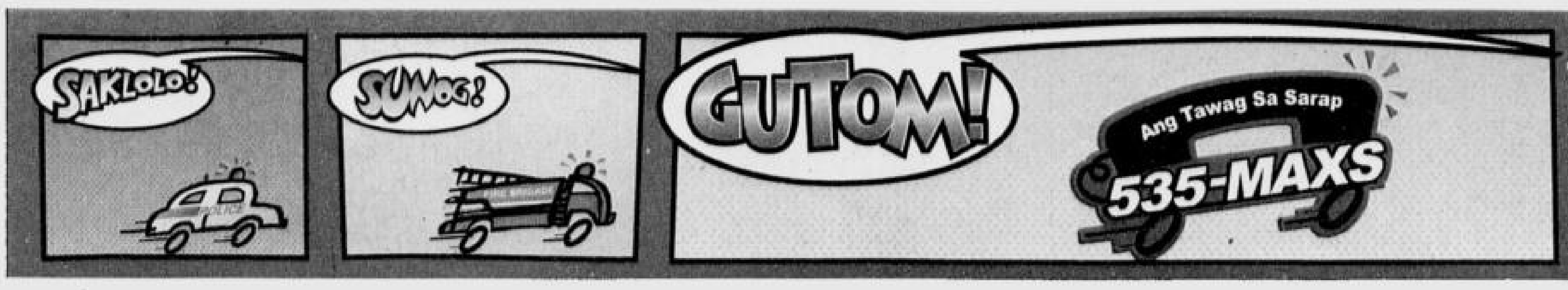
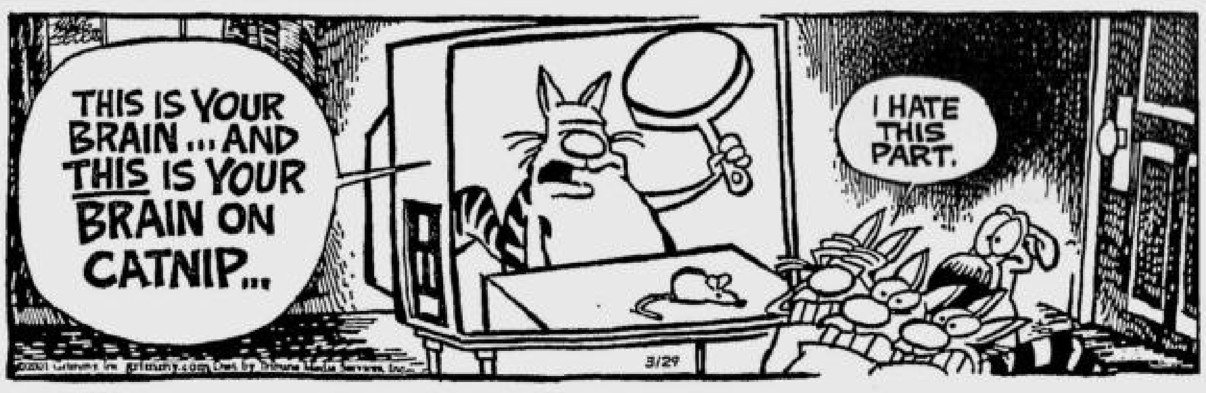
R320
P7,490
• pre-paid phonekit with free portable Handsfree
A2618
P4,590
• pre-paid phonekit
R310
for as low as
*P11,000
*with line subscription
R380
for as low as
*P30,000
*with line subscription
Available at Globe Telecom outlets & accredited dealers.
Visit our website: www.ericsson.com.ph/ or call the Ericsson helpdesk at 635-1860-61 or e-mail us at mobile. helpdesk @ enp.ericsson.se
Make yourself heard.
ERICSSON
METRO MANILA CENTERS ALABANG TOWN CENTER Alabang Zapote Rd Las Pinas • GREENHILLS 2F ALCO Bldg Ortigas Ave San Juan MM • GT PLAZA UG Globe Telecom Plaza Pioneer St Mandaluyong City • MARIKINA GF Alcantara Bldg 282 A Bonifacio Ave Marikina City • PARK SQUARE I South Drive Ayala Center Makati City • SHAW GF AB Sandoval Bldg Oranbo Drive cor Shaw Blvd Pasig City • SM CENTER POINT 3F Unit 310 Magsaysay Blvd cor Araneta Ave Sta Mesa Manila • SM FAIRVIEW 2F Quirino Highway cor Regalado Ave Greater Lagro Quezon City • SM MEGAMALL 5F Bldg. B Ortigas Center Pasig City • SM CITY Right Wing • SM Car Park Plaza III • SM MANILA 4F Arroceros St. Manila • • SM SOUTHMALL UG East Hall Way Alabang Zapote Rd Las Pinas • TOWER ONE GF Unit C Tower One and Exchange Plaza Ayala Ave Makati City • UN G/F Globe Telecom Bldg. 669 UN Ave Ermita Manila • FESTIVAL MALL 4F Alabang Zapote Wing Filinvest Corporate City Alabang Muntinlupa • HUB 2F Unit 252 and 254 Glorietta 4 NORTH LUZON CENTERS • ANGELES JMS Bldg McArthur Highway Salapungan Angeles Pampanga • BAGUIO 3F BPI Bldg Session Rd Baguio City • CABANATUAN CITY Ayala Life Bldg Maharlika Highway DAGUPAN CITY Carried Bldg MH del Pilar St Dagupan City • MEYCAUAYAN Meycauayan College Bldg MacArthur Highway SM Pampanga GF SM City • TARLAC Silayan Supermarket McArthur Hway Tarlac TUGUEGARAO Unit 57B Chowking Bldg Balzain Rd Tuguegarao City Cagayan Valley VIGAN Unit 3 Formoso Townhouse A Mabini St Vigan Ilocos Sur • SOUTHEAST LUZON ANTIPOLO 2F Camina Bldg 5 Circumferential Rd Antipolo Rizal • CALAMBA 2F J Alcaid Bldg Crossing Calamba Laguna • LEGASPI 2F A Bichara Silverscreen & Entertainment Center Magallanes cor Alonzo St Legazpi City • LUCENA Unit 3 VEA Building Hermana Fausta Lucena City • SAN PABLO 19 M. Leonor St. San Pablo City • SOUTHWEST LUZON BACOOR Gen Tirona Highway Barangay Dulong Bayan Bacoor Cavite • BOLBOK Diversion Ext Rd Brgy Bolbok Batangas City • CALAPAN GF Ferraren Bldg M Leuterio St Calapan Oriental Mindoro • LIPA AMS Bldg GF 50 B Morada Ave Lipa City • MOLINO GF EVY Corp Bldg Molino Rd Bacoor Cavite • SM BACOOR 3F Aguinaldo Highway cor Tirona Cavite • VISAYAS CENTERS BACOLOD Unit 107 VSB Mall Lacson St Bacolod City • CEBU AYALA CENTER 2F Paseo Verde Ayala Center Cebu Business Park Cebu City • CEBU KANGHA GF Kangha Bldg Osmena Blvd cor Lapu-Lapu St Cebu City • SM CEBU 3F North Reclamation Cebu City • SM ILOILO 2F SM City Iloilo B Aquino Ave Mandurriao Iloilo City • MINDANAO CENTERS BUTUAN Urios College Gym JC Aquino cor Calo St Butuan City • CAGAYAN DE ORO GF Meta Arcade Capt Vicente Rd ExtCagayan de Oro City • COTABATO CITY GF El Marco Bldg Sinsuat Ave Cotabato City • DAVAO-VICTORIA PLAZA 2F Victoria Plaza JP Laurel Ave Bajada Davao City • DAVAO Grand Men Seng Hotel A Pichon St Davao City • GENERAL SANTOS Door 17 Rd Bldg Santiago Blvd General Santos City • ILIGAN G/F Kimberly Bldg National Highway Tibanga Iligan City • VALENCIA BUKIDNON Garcia's Bldg Catarata St cor Sayre Highway • ZAMBOANGA ARV Bldg San Jose Rd Zamboanga City
GLOBE TELECOM Business Center


SAKLOLO!
SUNOG!
GUTOM!
Ang Tawag Sa Sarap
535-MAXS

Max's to the rescue!
In case of gutom, dial 535-MAXS. (6297)
Max's

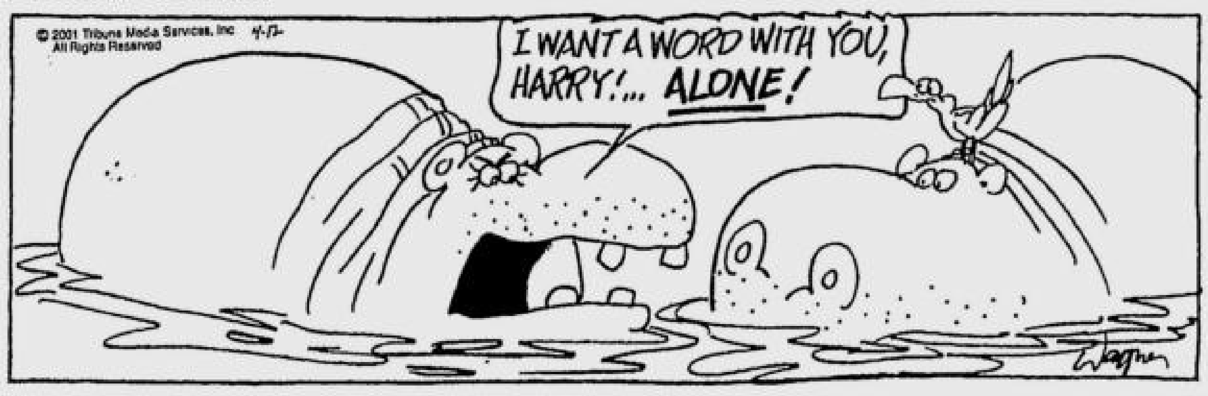
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ... AND THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON CATNIP...
I HATE THIS PART.
3/29

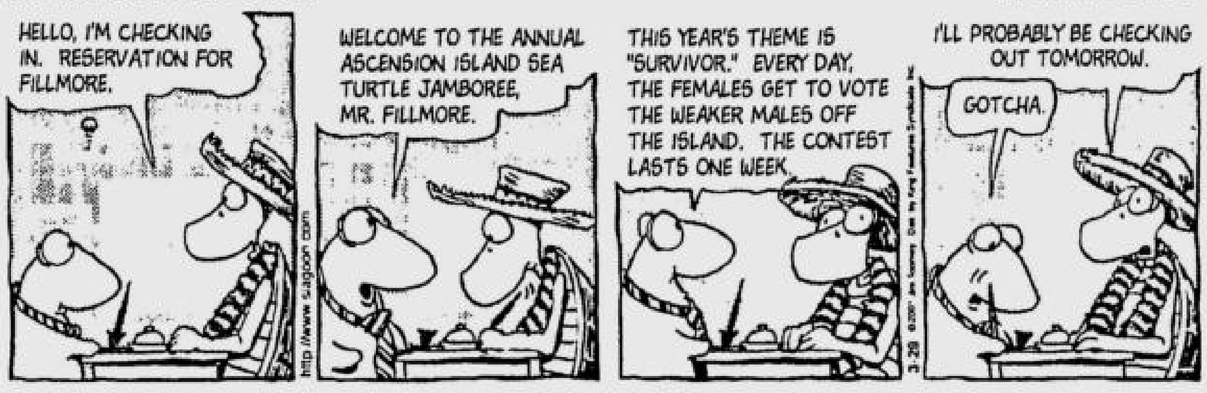
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


© 2001 Tribune Media Services, Inc All Rights Reserved 4-17
I WANT A WORD WITH YOU, HARRY!... ALONE!
Wagner

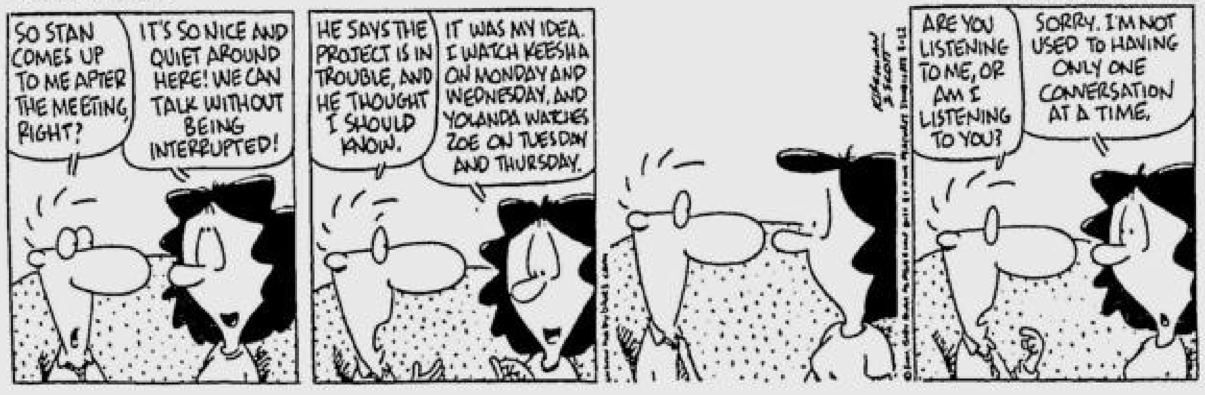
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


HELLO, I'M CHECKING IN. RESERVATION FOR FILLMORE.
WELCOME TO THE ANNUAL ASCENSION ISLAND SEA TURTLE JAMBOREE, MR. FILLMORE.
THIS YEAR'S THEME IS "SURVIVOR." EVERY DAY, THE FEMALES GET TO VOTE THE WEAKER MALES OFF THE ISLAND. THE CONTEST LASTS ONE WEEK.
I'LL PROBABLY BE CHECKING OUT TOMORROW.
GOTCHA.
http://www.slagoon.com
3-28

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


SO STAN COMES UP TO ME AFTER THE MEETING, RIGHT?
IT'S SO NICE AND QUIET AROUND HERE! WE CAN TALK WITHOUT BEING INTERRUPTED!
HE SAYS THE PROJECT IS IN TROUBLE, AND HE THOUGHT I SHOULD KNOW.
IT WAS MY IDEA. I WATCH KEESHA ON MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY, AND YOLANDA WATCHES ZOE ON TUESDAY AND THURSDAY.
ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME, OR AM I LISTENING TO YOU?
SORRY. I'M NOT USED TO HAVING ONLY ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Eliot Ness, Paloma Picasso, Dudley Moore, Tim Curry, Ashley Judd, Kate Hudson.

Happy Birthday: Get busy doing and saying what's in your heart. You'll be miserable if you look back, thinking "could have," "would have," "should have." Get off your couch and show the world what you've got. Take the initiative, and you'll be able to stand tall and say, "I did it." Your numbers: 5, 19, 21, 27, 33, 48

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Use your intuition when dealing with employers and clients. You are always so eager to get a job done. This time, ask for your money upfront. You've been too trusting in the past.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Love does strange things. You may be tempted to impress your mate by spending more than you should. Don't do it; you will only make him or her think you're extravagant.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't let your personal problems interfere with your professional work. Be prepared to put in some long hours if you are having trouble meeting your deadlines.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Romance will be your prime concern. Your efforts will be appreciated. Let your mate know how much you care. Plan a cozy evening for two and discuss your future plans.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't push yourself too hard. Your resistance is low and you need your rest. Financial stress will cause nervous tension. Try to be prudent. You don't have to impress others by paying for them.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You'll be tempted to spend more than you should on your home and family. Don't let others talk you into doing things that you really don't want to do.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You'll have the drive to finish important projects. Don't let anyone stand in the way of your progress. It's time to put on the pressure and go after the advance you were promised way back when.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You'll be romantically attracted to someone you meet socially. Be cautious; this person may not be telling you the whole truth and is probably still attached to someone else. Don't move too quickly.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Someone may try to curtail your freedom. Set him or her straight and don't give in to emotional blackmail. It's time for you to explore some new avenues. Follow your heart.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't divulge secrets that will come back to haunt you. You'll be the target for rumors if you aren't discreet about your personal life. Problems with co-workers will be disturbing.

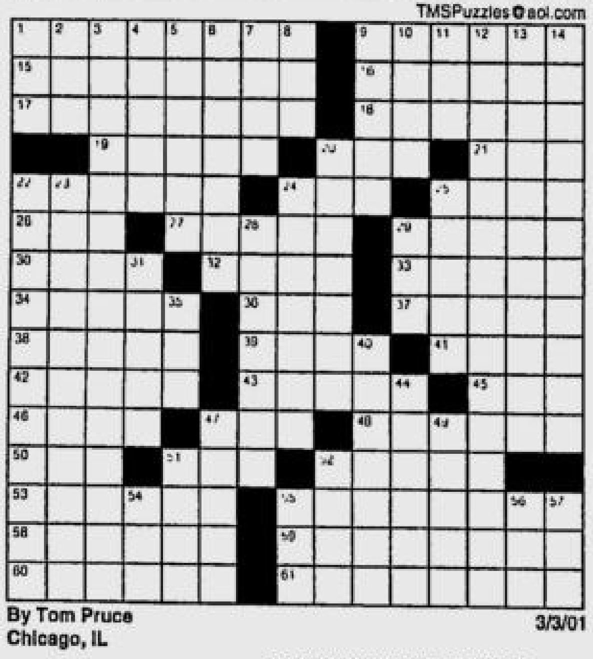
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Update your personal papers. Take care of any minor health problems. Business deals will turn out better than you thought. Let someone else put up the cash. You'll be doing the work.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Whatever you do, don't neglect the one you love. You need to put some time aside to nurture the relationship if you don't want to face separation.

Birthday Baby: You have a wonderful imagination and are always ready to elaborate on the way you feel. You are creative, sensitive and always wanting to be where the action is.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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By Tom Pruce
Chicago, IL

3/3/01

ACROSS
1 Food-coloring plants
9 Formed
15 Cities in Texas and Kansas
16 City in southern Italia
17 Bookstore browsers
18 Shaw and others
19 MacDonald's refrain
20 Snow runner
21 Acad.
22 Eliminator
24 Pig's pad
25 Be too kind
26 Compass pt.
27 "One Hundred and One Dalmatians" author Smith
29 Greek colony
30 Small vipers
32 Cleo's river
33 Unnatural sleep
34 Hunt illegally
36 Pooh-bah
37 QB Dilfer
38 Cat sounds
39 Chills
41 Macbeth's dagger
42 Two quartets
43 Day of movies
45 Writer Deighton
46 Hoarfrost
47 Fowl female
48 Deceivers
50 Roh ___ Wu of Korea
51 Dawn goddess
52 H. Ross ___
53 "Delaware Water Gap" painter
55 Euripides drama
58 Anti-knock number
59 Appraise anew
60 Fitted together in a stack
61 Parquet circle

DOWN
1 Dolt
2 Justice Fortas
3 Rescue units
4 Smooth and effortless
5 Add grass to greens
6 Long-range golf club
7 Stout's Wolfe
8 Draft org.
9 Serpentine
10 Mata ___
11 To the point
12 Defamatory epistle
13 Work for a candidate
14 Causes despondency
20 More sharply inclined
22 Distribute a different way
23 Nonchalance
24 Word with chip or valley
25 Cabinet features
28 Separates
29 Sect member's suffix
31 Cliff-base debris
35 DDE's predecessor
40 Brandy cocktail
44 Most likely
47 Watered, as the lawn
49 Deputized body
51 Medieval slave
52 Supplication
54 Devour
55 Avant-garde French sculptor
56 Neighbor of Leb.
57 Opposite of NNW

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

G	O	T	H	■	S	F	P	D	■	A	N	G	L	E
A	C	R	E	■	I	R	A	E	■	M	O	R	O	N
S	T	O	A	■	L	O	R	E	■	B	R	O	A	D
B	A	W	L	C	O	N	T	R	O	L	■	A	D	S
A	V	E	■	E	S	T	H	■	D	E	A	N	■	■
G	E	L	I	D	■	■	I	K	E	■	S	M	U	G
■	■	■	C	A	F	T	A	N	S	■	S	A	G	O
R	E	W	I	R	E	S	■	U	S	T	I	N	O	V
S	T	A	C	■	T	A	R	T	A	R	S	■	■	■
T	A	I	L	■	I	R	E	■	■	A	T	B	A	T
■	■	L	E	S	S	■	E	G	A	D	■	I	V	Y
W	E	B	■	W	H	I	N	E	C	E	L	L	A	R
A	D	O	B	E	■	S	T	E	M	■	O	L	L	A
C	E	A	S	E	■	E	R	S	E	■	L	I	O	N
O	N	T	A	P	■	E	Y	E	S	■	L	E	N	T

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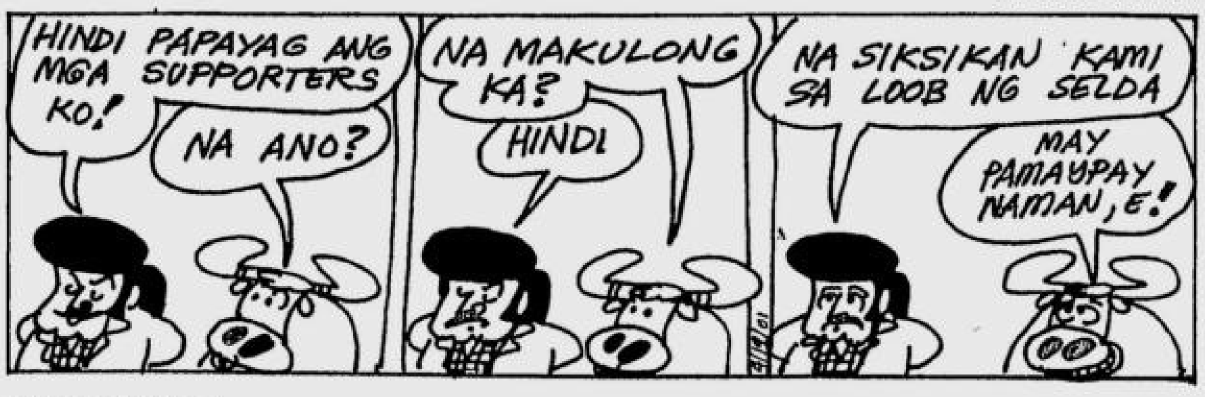
3/3/01

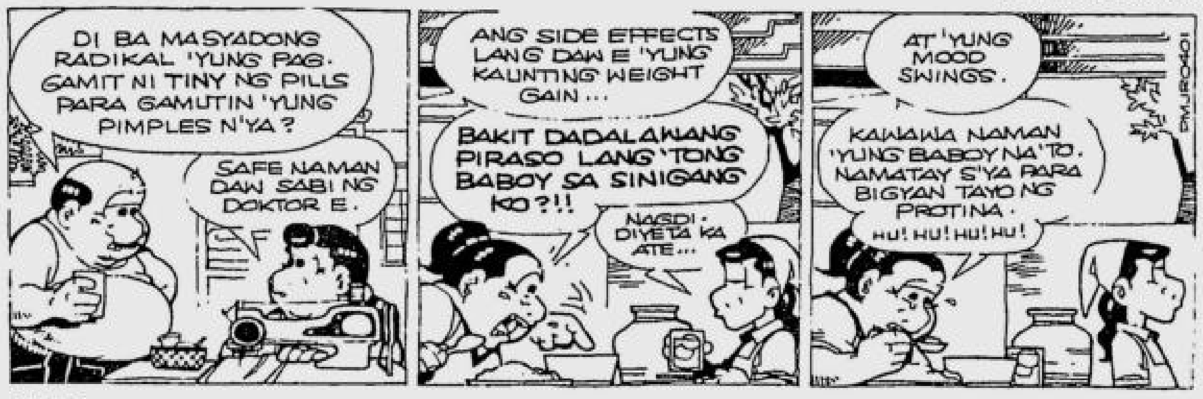
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HINDI PAPAYAG ANG MGA SUPPORTERS KO!
NA ANO?
NA MAKULONG KA?
HINDI
NA SIKSIKAN KAMI SA LOOB NG SELDA
MAY PAMAYPAY NAMAN, E!

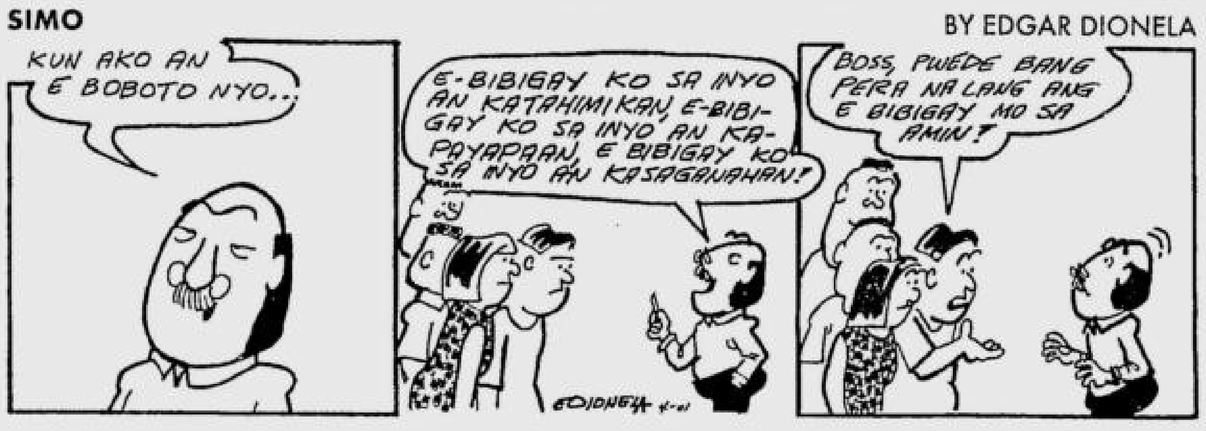
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


DI BA MASYADONG RADIKAL 'YUNG PAG-GAMIT NI TINY NG PILLS PARA GAMUTIN 'YUNG PIMPLES N'YA?
SAFE NAMAN DAW SABI NG DOKTOR E.
ANG SIDE EFFECTS LANG DAW E 'YUNG KAUNTING WEIGHT GAIN...
BAKIT DADALAWANG PIRASO LANG 'TONG BABOY SA SINIGANG KO?!!
NAGDI-DIYETA KA ATE...
AT 'YUNG MOOD SWINGS.
KAWAWA NAMAN 'YUNG BABOY NA 'TO. NAMATAY S'YA PARA BIGYAN TAYO NG PROTINA.
HU! HU! HU! HU!
PMJR0401

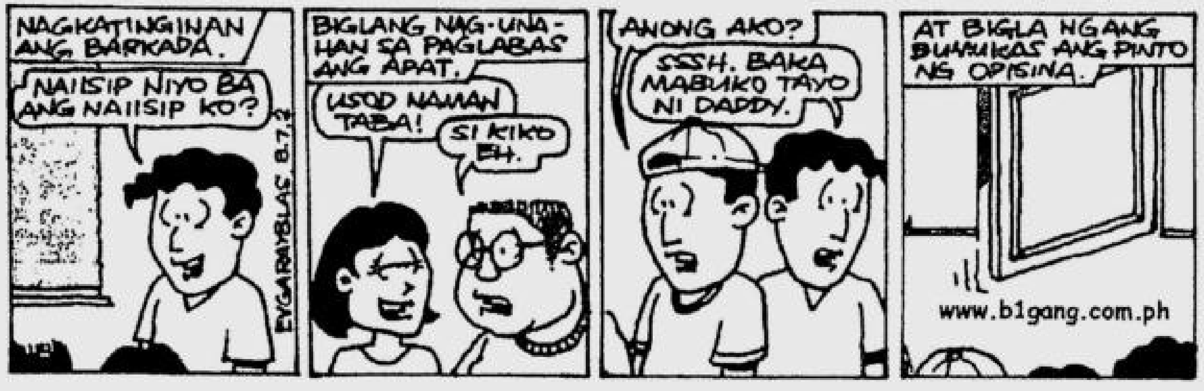
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


KUN AKO AN E BOBOTO NYO...
E-BIBIGAY KO SA INYO AN KATAHIMIKAN, E-BIBIGAY KO SA INYO AN KAPAYAPAAN, E BIBIGAY KO SA INYO AN KASAGANAHAN!
BOSS, PWEDE BANG PERA NA LANG ANG E BIBIGAY MO SA AMIN?
EDIONELA 4-01

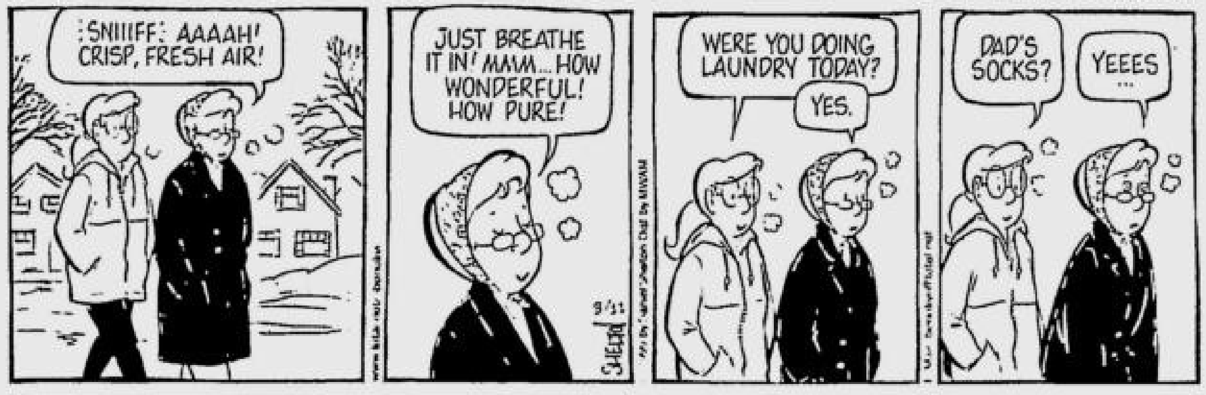
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


NAGKATINGINAN ANG BARKADA.
NAIISIP NIYO BA ANG NAIISIP KO?
EYGARAYBLAS 8.7.2
BIGLANG NAG-UNAHAN SA PAGLABAS ANG APAT.
USOD NAMAN TABA!
SI KIKO EH.
ANONG AKO?
SSSH. BAKA MABUKO TAYO NI DADDY.
AT BIGLA NGANG BUMUKAS ANG PINTO NG OPISINA.
www.b1gang.com.ph

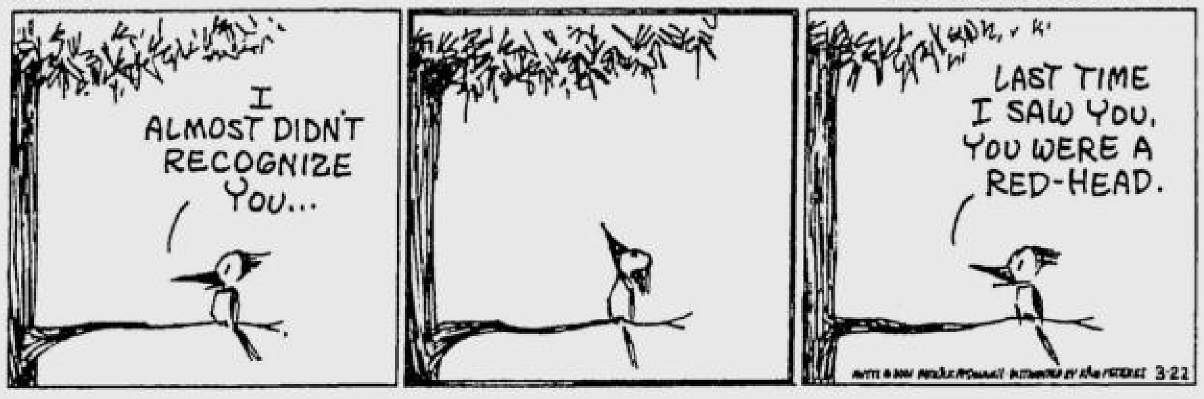
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


:SNIIIFF: AAAAH! CRISP, FRESH AIR!
JUST BREATHE IT IN! MMM... HOW WONDERFUL! HOW PURE!
WERE YOU DOING LAUNDRY TODAY?
YES.
DAD'S SOCKS?
YEEES ...
SHELTON 3/11

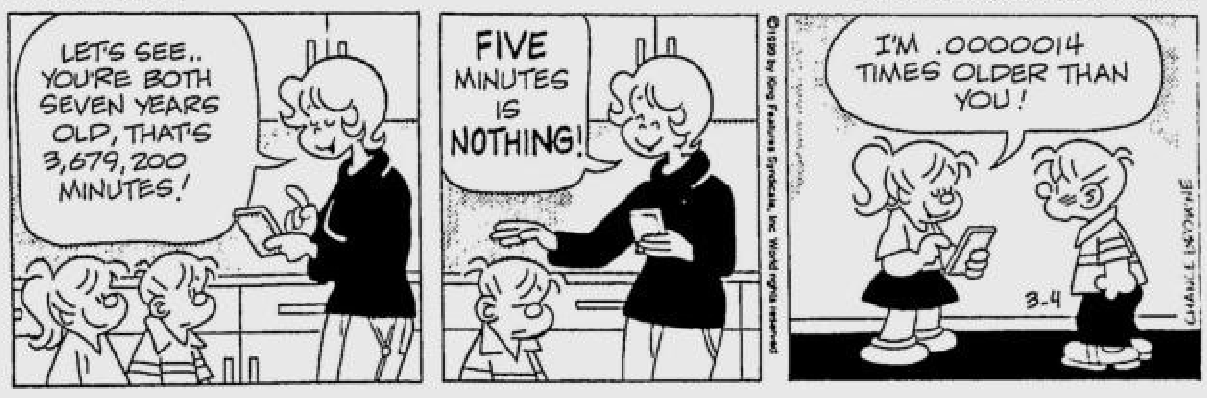
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I ALMOST DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU...
LAST TIME I SAW YOU, YOU WERE A RED-HEAD.
3-22

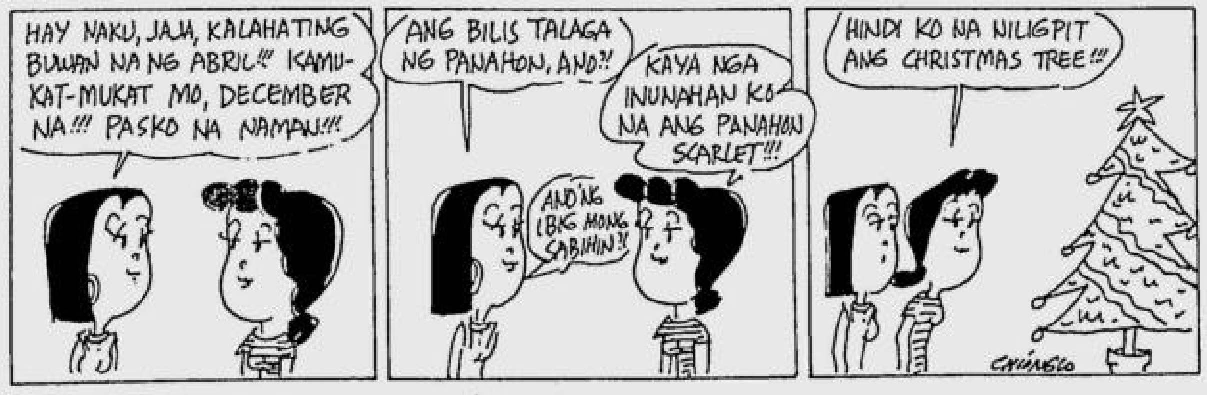
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


LET'S SEE.. YOU'RE BOTH SEVEN YEARS OLD, THAT'S 3,679,200 MINUTES!
FIVE MINUTES IS NOTHING!
I'M .0000014 TIMES OLDER THAN YOU!
3-4
CHANCE BROWNE

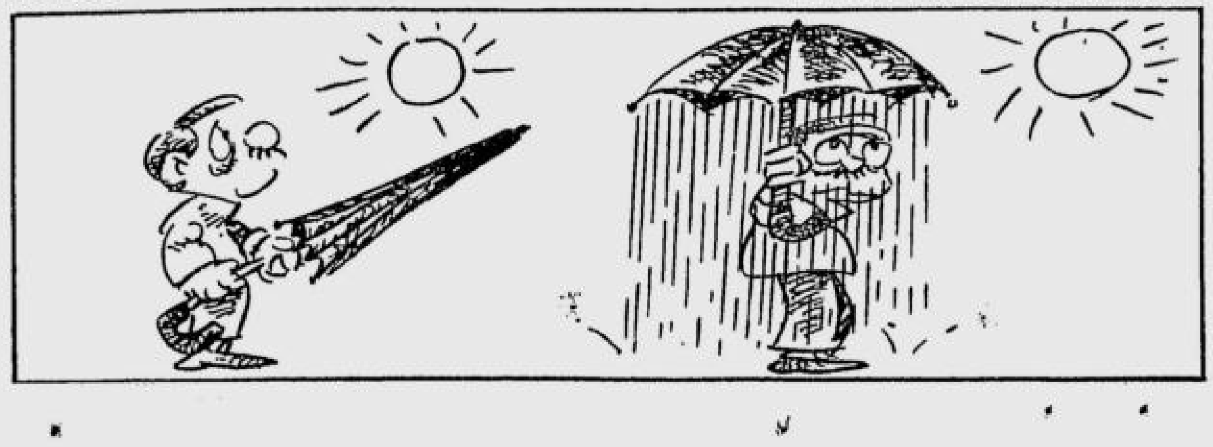
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


HAY NAKU, JAJA, KALAHATING BUWAN NA NG ABRIL!!! KAMUKAT-MUKAT MO, DECEMBER NA!!! PASKO NA NAMAN!!!
ANG BILIS TALAGA NG PANAHON, ANO?!
AND'NG IBIG MONG SABIHIN?!
KAYA NGA INUNAHAN KO NA ANG PANAHON SCARLET!!!
HINDI KO NA NILIGPIT ANG CHRISTMAS TREE!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING



Baliwag barbecue booth expands into a full resto

A COMMON landmark in major streets in Metro Manila, your local neighborhood roaster Baliwag Lechon Manok and Liempo has so dominated the market its poor copycats have closed shop and the scant competition left is slowly dying.

Given such edge, the management of Baliwag has decided to pick up the challenges of expansion and diversification. Baliwag has matured into a full line grill and restaurant carrying not only its trademark *lechon manok* and pork *liempo* but also an array of authentic Bulakeño dishes.

Along the cool and quiet portion of E. Rodriguez Avenue corner Balete Drive, QC, one can easily spot the cozy *kubo* and *pawid* facade of the Baliwag Grill and Restaurant. Warm and friendly faces, typical to true Bulakeños, welcome patrons, who have the option of dining under the open sky in its garden patio or indoors. Both open and enclosed portions of the grill are made more convivial with sprawling garden plants and water streams.

The Baliwag Grill and Restaurant serves an all-Filipino feast of Bulacan lineage. The emphasis is on good food, prompt service and huge Pinoy servings.

Starters include crunchy original Baliwag *chicharon* in both spicy and non-spicy flavors. Of course, a visit won't be the complete without the house specialty of *lechon manok* or *liempo* fresh from the grill. Other house specialties are crispy *pata* and *lechon kawali*.

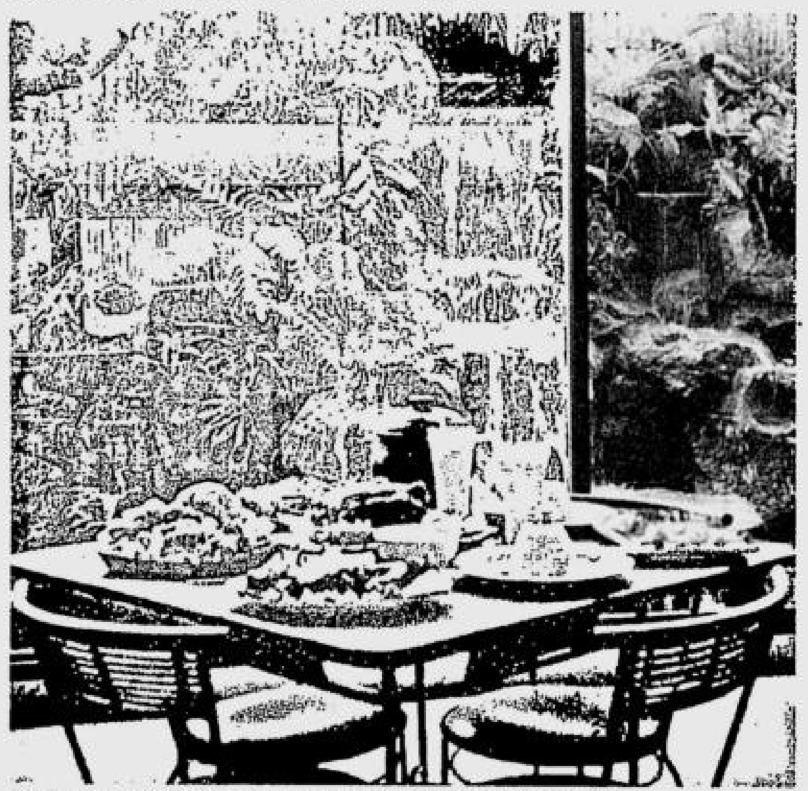
For other barbecue specialties, the Baliwag Grill offers grilled tuna belly and *panga*, *inihaw na tilapia*, *pusit*, pork chop and *bangus*.

The lineup of sizzlers—pork *sisig*, *pusit*, tuna, chicken, boneless *bangus* and *gambas*—completes the feast when added to the seafood specialties of *nilasing na hipon*, *pusit* and *bangus à la pobre*, shrimp tempura and their *sinigang na ulo-ulo* and *hipon*.

Definitely, Baliwag Lechon Manok and Liempo has come a long way from its humble beginning 12 years ago in Bulacan. Call 726-4088 /8879.

INDOOR dining area

BALIWAG RESTAURANT
Home of special lechon manok
FULL line counter offers authentic Bulakeño dishes.


AL fresco serving of good old *lechon manok* and *liempo*.

Superkitchen TV raffle extended

GOOD news for raffle-happy cooks: Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce and Reynolds Wrap are extending the deadline for the Superkitchen TV x 10 Raffle to May 31.

To win a brand new Panasonic 14" color TV set—and there are 10 of them up for grabs—send in the cream-colored outer wrapper of any-size Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce and one proof-of-purchase (bar code) found on any box or wrapper of Reynolds Wrap or Reynolds Redi-pans. Clip together and write your name, address, telephone number, signature and privilege card number on the Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce wrapper.

Send entries to P.O. Box 13210, Ortigas Center Post Office, Pasig City not later than May 31. Entries will be raffled on June 15 and winners will be notified by telephone or telegram. Only foil products manufactured by Reynolds Phils. Corp. and Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce distributed by Getz Brothers Phils., Zinc. will be accepted as valid entries. Unclaimed prizes after 30 days from notification will be raffled off.

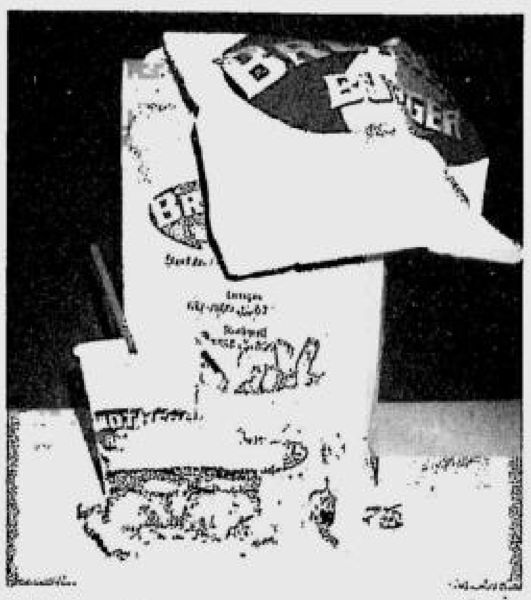
Enjoy burger treats and win a prize

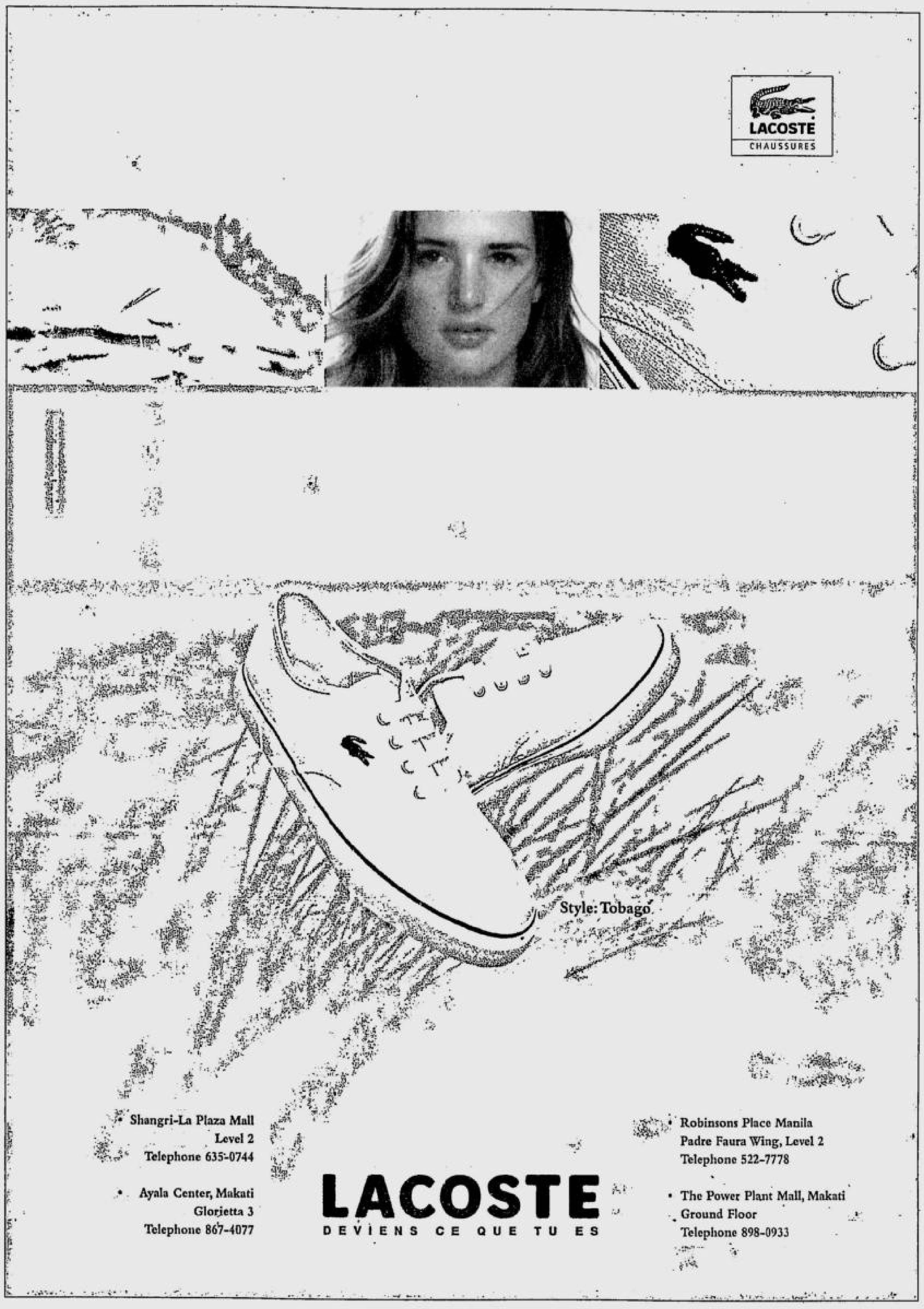
BURGER lovers can satisfy their urge at Brothers Burger and win prizes as the outlet celebrates its first year at Rockwell Center. Brothers Burger launches a celebration of flame-grilled burgers, tasty milkshakes and other mouthwatering delights.

For every P250 purchase at the store, customers are entitled to draw a prize and win Brothers Burger anniversary T-shirts, Nestea iced tea, their famous skin-on French fries, key chains, milkshakes, Brothers Crispy Fish or their very own choice of a hot-off-the-grill Brothers Burger.

Get your fill from the regular Brothers Burger to the hefty Brothers Pounder then top it off with such gourmet choices as teriyaki, chili, cream cheese with garlic, blue cheese, wasabi mayo or honey Dijon mustard. Burgers are cooked only upon order and served on oatmeal-encrusted buns. The selection also includes chicken sandwiches, cheese steak sandwiches and home-cooked giant chocolate chip cookies.

The anniversary promo is valid only at Brothers Burger in Rockwell Center until today.

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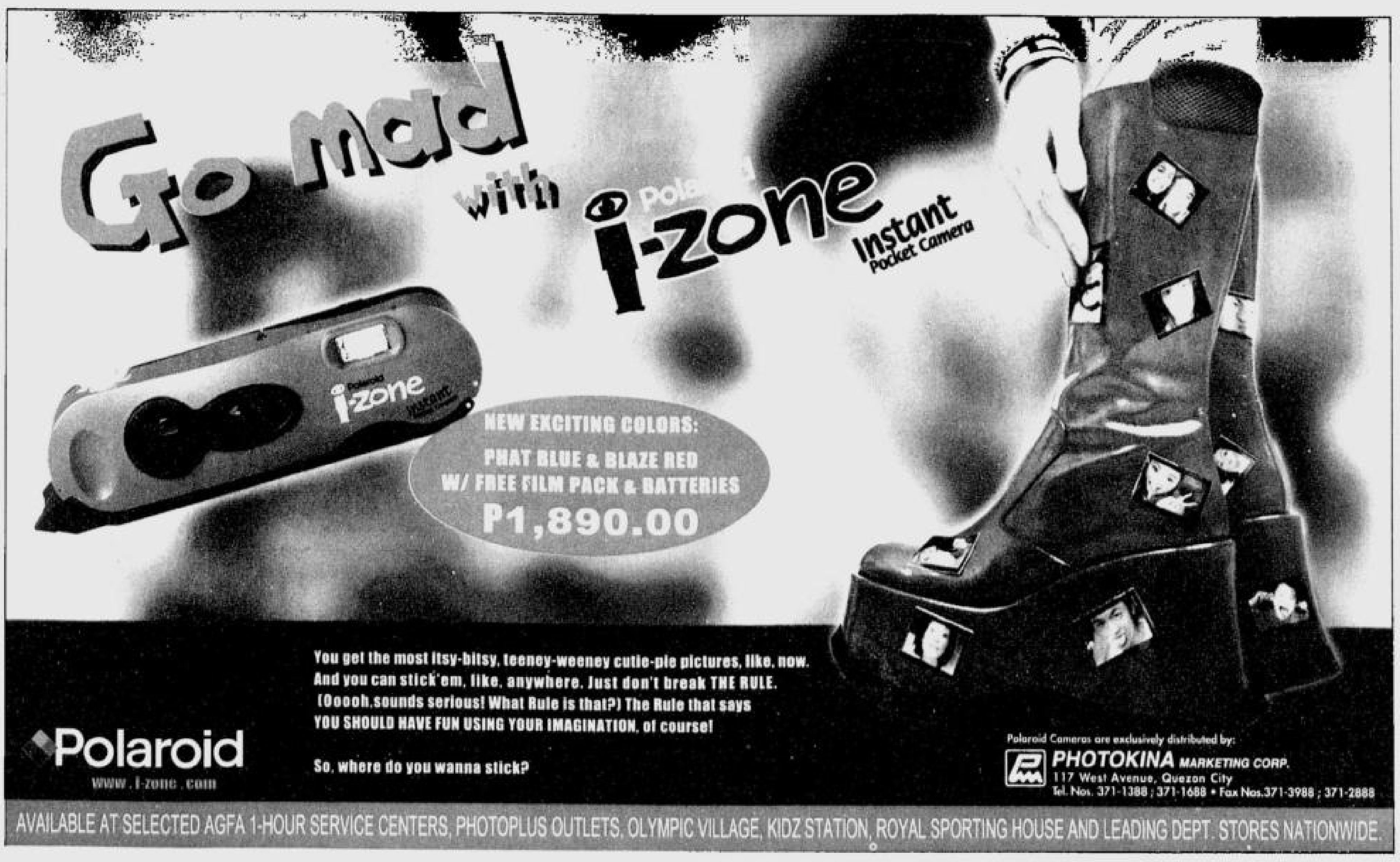
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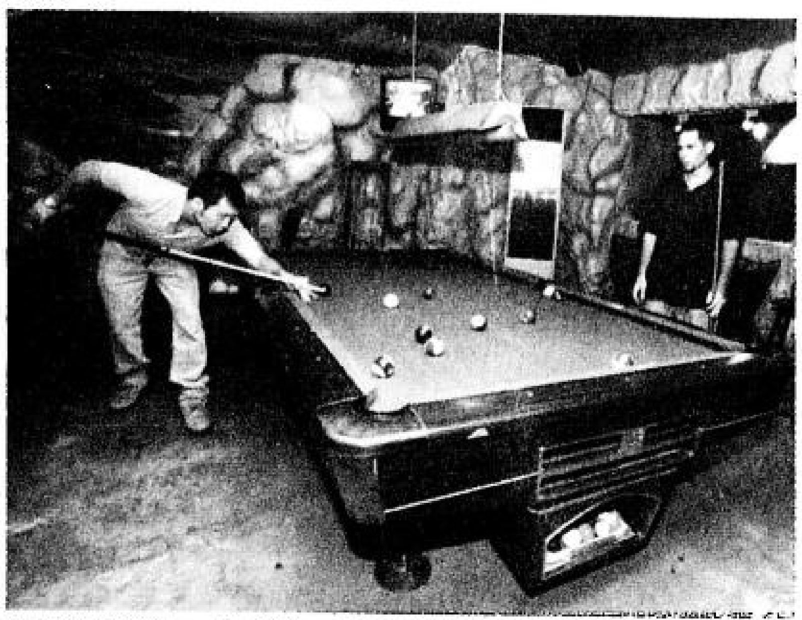
ISLAND FEEL. Diners unwind amid Jekyll & Hyde's tropical ambiance.

By day, it's a sedate place offering student-friendly meals. By night, a transformation takes place as the bar opens, a live band comes in and the grill is fired up



QUEBENGCO and Del Villar play a game of pool by the cove.

Double take

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA
PHOTOS BY VAL HANDUMON

THE LEGEND of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde lives on, this time in a restaurant with a dual personality inspired by the fictional characters it was named after.

No need to be alarmed, though, since the interior of Jekyll & Hyde Resto-Grille is a world away from the dark, cold setting so vividly described in the novel. Nor will the bloodthirsty Mr. Hyde stage a surprise appearance anytime soon.

The new place across De La Salle University on Taft Avenue (beside Kenny Roger's) recreates a tropical island where, legend says, the disgraced Dr. Jekyll and his wicked alter ego, Mr. Hyde, fled to never to be seen or heard from again.

Bright murals of sun, sea and sand cover the dining room walls, while the billiard hall resembles an underwater cove complete with silhouettes of dolphins set against the marine blue ceiling. A game of pool can set a pair back by P110 per hour.

Tropical touches

Artificial torches lit a passageway lined with fishing nets and crowned with a trellis of artificial vines. The same corridor connects the outdoor balcony to the air-conditioned dining area, where several fake coconut trees and fortune plants give it an outdoor feel. Phony cave-like rocks make up the restroom walls, while jagged stone pieces form the resto floor.

Tropical touches extend to the *sawali*-covered walls, rugged crates that conceal a couple of air-conditioning units, indoor eaves made of *nipa* and several wrought-iron wall lamps that resemble crawling lizards.

BEEF Oriental—rice topped with beef, carrots, bell pepper and onion tops in oyster sauce

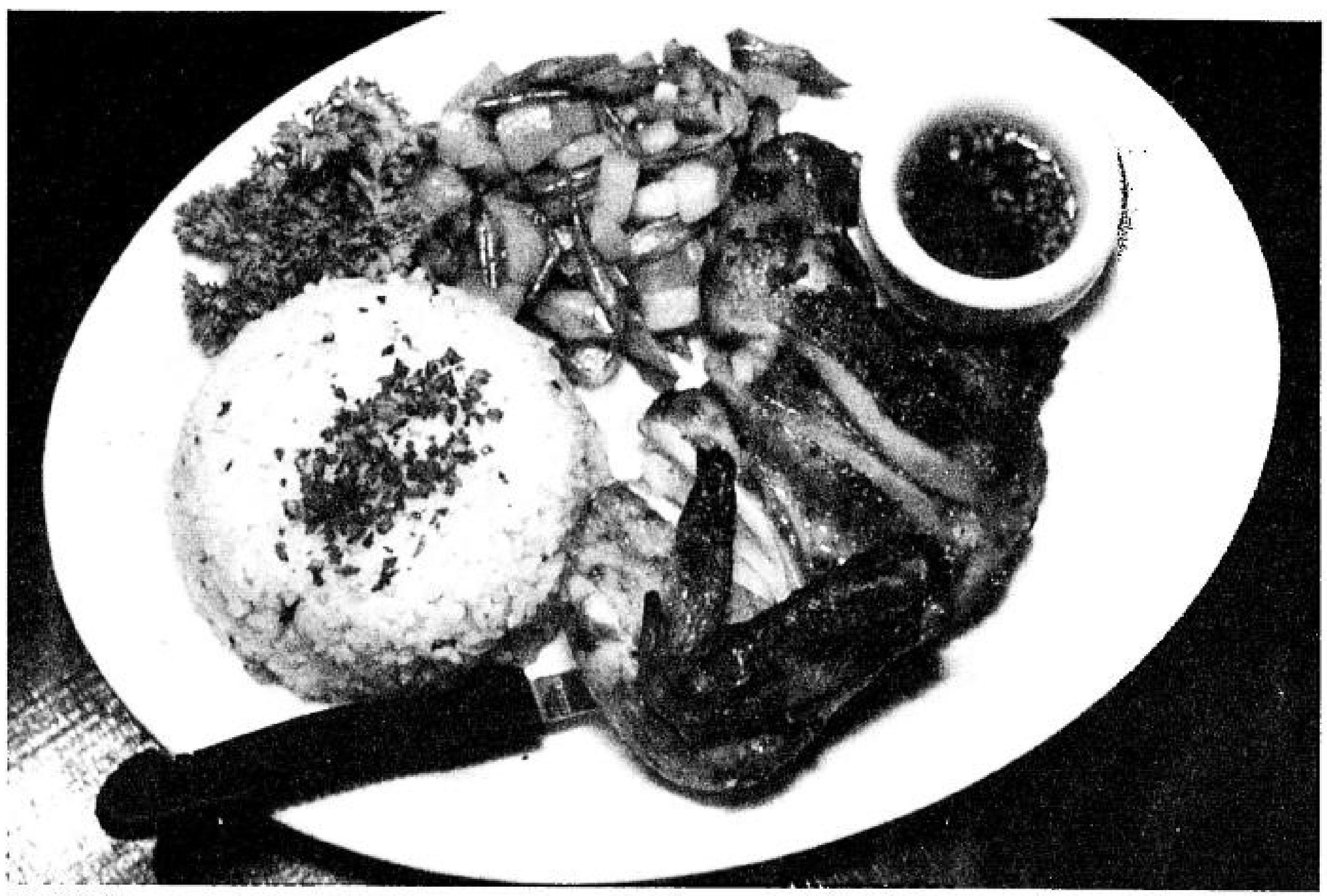
The mangled right wing of a light airplane that supposedly nose-dived on the beach doubles as a bar top. Guess who cheated death in a bid to escape from a cruel world?

"Dr. Jekyll didn't really die," says Brian Quebengco, the restaurant's marketing manager. "He came upon an island and this is our idea of it."

The transformation extends to its food. Jekyll & Hyde also offers two sets of menu for lunch and dinnertime guests. Rice toppings, pasta dishes and grilled specialties at student-friendly prices are served from 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

People on the go can grab an order of rice topping (P55 per order) served in a microwavable plastic container. Best-selling items include chicken teriyaki, pork *adobo* and vegetable risotto.

Despite the mad-cow scare, Oriental rice heaped with strips of beef in mushroom or oyster sauce is doing well. The kitchen plans to come up with a rice mix of the month that's bound to keep patrons guessing.



CHICKEN *inasal*, garlic rice and buttered veggies

"We have a wide range of affordable but delicious food items for lunch," says restaurant manager Mike del Villar. "Our prices are in the same range as other fast-food restaurants around."

At P75 a dish, grilled and pasta specialties served on a plate are likewise doing well. As far as patrons are concerned, country-style spareribs, pork chop and pork barbecue are among the top three choices.

What will it be for lunch? Spaghetti, fettuccine or angel's hair pasta? Those who go for American-Italian can choose from carbonara, bolognese or pesto sauce. If it's Mongolian food you're craving for, then Del Villar suggests you try their Kaula Mix (P94 plus a free drink)—a buffet of Mongolian delights cooked right before your eyes.

"Nobody knows how you like your Mongolian," he says. "So we let you choose the ingredients and garnishing you want."

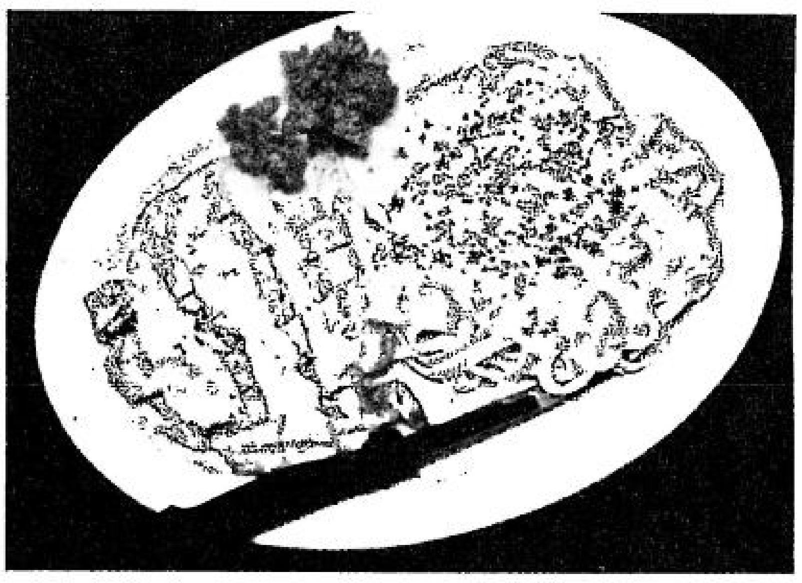
Night fever

As darkness descends, indoor lights get dimmer, the music slower and the menu more varied. Alcoholic drinks—from beer, vodka to red wine—now compete with daytime staples such as sodas, mineral water, fruit juices and the ubiquitous iced tea.

Beer and vodka until the wee hours? Uh-oh, there goes the neighborhood.

"We won't have a problem with that," Del Villar assures, "as long as we serve drinks at night."

A typical "Hyde" entrée (from P125-P165) comes with a pair of side dishes. The chicken *inasal*, for instance, is served with garlic rice and buttered veggies, the chicken escalope, with mashed potato and a generous serving of corn and carrots.



FETTUCCINE with chicken and mushrooms

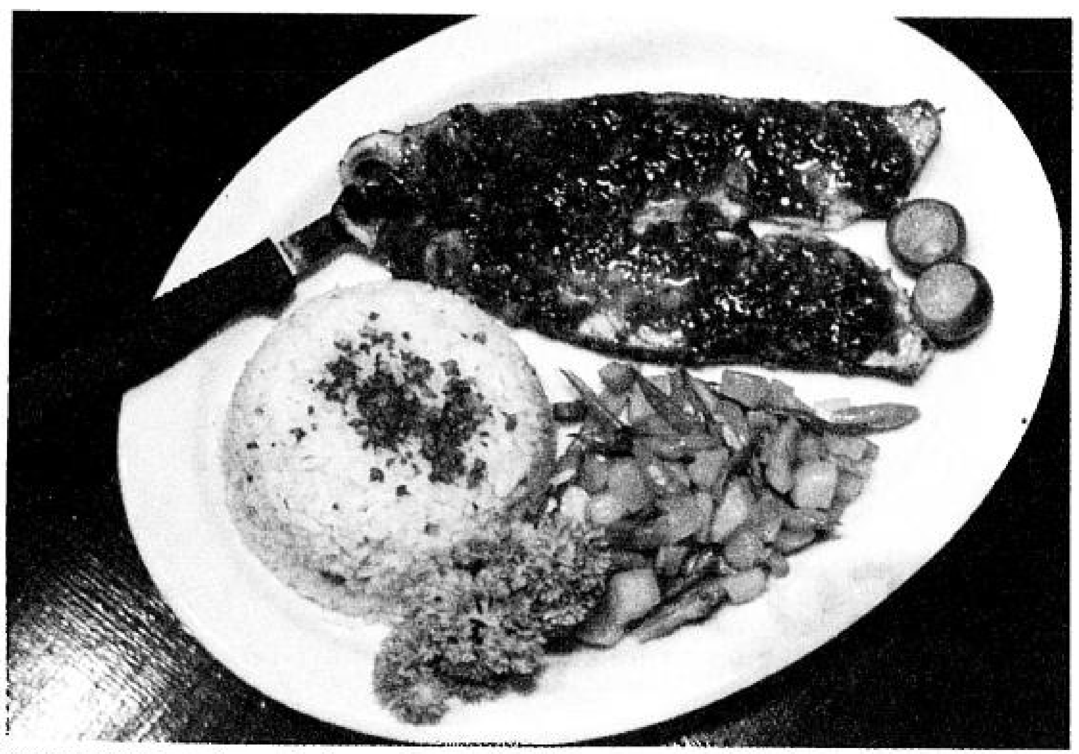
Aside from barbecued pork, chicken and spare ribs, diners can go for grilled seafood such as squid, blue marlin, *bangus* and salmon belly served with garlic rice and vegetables.

Or they can order beer while they listen to the evening's featured band. Of course, a number of alternative groups will be alternating with mainstream bands. In keeping with its island theme, the place will also feature Jamaican, Cuban and reggae bands.

"Jekyll & Hyde is the first of its kind here," says Quebengco. "We envision it to liven up the nighttime scene on Taft."

If that happens, not a few party animals nursing a hangover from last night's wild shindig would find themselves in the middle of a sedate place when they wake up the morning after.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



GRILLED blue marlin, garlic rice and buttered veggies

Master of libation shows intricacies of scotch blend

THE PERFECTLY smooth, rich blend of Johnnie Walker Black Label is something that men of distinguished taste are happily acquainted with. But not many are familiar with the world-famous Scotch whiskey brand's even richer history, its recipe and all the work that goes into making it a masterpiece of a blend.

With his infectious passion, wit and a few bottles of Johnnie Walker Black Label as ammunition, Johnnie Walker Program Mentor Alan Atkins has been spreading the good word about his beloved libation, attending and speaking at social gatherings around the city as Johnnie Walker ambassador of good taste.

He explains that the drink many have enjoyed through the years is actually a combination of more than 40 malt and grain whiskeys all blended in Scotland and aged a minimum of 12 years in oak casks. More surprising is the fact that Johnnie Walker Black Label has basically remained true to its original recipe, concocted by Alexander Walker in 1867.

JOHNNIE Walker mentor Alan Atkins has been going around town as Johnnie Walker's ambassador of good taste.

According to Atkins, each of the more than 40 whiskey blends have splendid, seductive characteristics all their own, each adding a distinctive layer of color, texture and taste to overall fulfilling experience that is Johnnie Walker Black Label.

Throughout the Mentor Program, Atkins' audience is rewarded with the pleasure of experiencing four of the 40 whiskey blends that make up Johnnie Walker Black Label: The sweet tasting and light textured single grain whiskey made from the Cameron Brig distillery not far from Edinburgh; the single malt whiskey made from Cardhu in the Speyside highlands; the sweet and dry Talisker whiskey from the storm-lashed isle of Skye; and the darkly colored single malt Lagavulin whiskey from Islay in Southern Scotland.

In this journey of taste, Atkins allows his listeners to nose—that is to smell—the whiskey and, finally, to taste it and determine each one's difference.

Brada Gallery to hold cooking classes

CHEF Ed Quimson announces the schedule of summer cooking classes at the Brada Gallery in April and May. Starting April 20, 35 classes will be open, ranging from pastas and *paellas* to everyday food and fusion cooking (suggested for restaurant owners and chefs). A special series of 10 lectures for children includes Kitchen Safety, Table Setting and Etiquette, Cookie Buffet, Sandwich Carnival, Pasta of all shapes and sizes, Frying and Barbecuing, and ends in a graduation for the child cooks.

Master Chef Quimson, of Chinese-Filipino-Spanish descent, has worked as chef in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Cebu, Manila and on a cruise ship. He has lent his expertise to such restaurants as La Tasca, Via Mare, the Members' Lounge at the Manila Stock Exchange, the Nielsen Tower and the Subic Bay Yacht Club. He runs a catering service called Rent-a-Chef, writes feature articles and is a teacher for many years now.

Ronald Sampaga, Brada partner and associate chef, is Laguna-born, with experience in baking and running his own restaurant, and has been cooking and teaching alongside Ed Quimson for several years now.

Classes will be held at the Brada Gallery, 4/F Creekside Building, Amorsolo Street, Makati. Call 893-7677.

Culinary summer courses for teens

KIDS are never too young to learn. Join Chef Gino and Chef Tricia on April 19, 20, 26 and 27, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at the Kids Cooking Workshop. Learn kiddie recipes like Macaroni Salad, Chicken à la King, Japanese Salad, Rocky Road, Mini Pizza, Rice Crispy Bars and Tacos. Open to kids from 5-12 years old. Course fee is P1,200 a day.

Teens are invited to learn gourmet recipes on April 21, 1-4 p.m., at The Teen Cookery Workshop. Recipes include Chicken Parmesan, Chicken à la King in Puff Pastry Cups, Fried Mozzarella with Salsa, Fillet of Steak with Three Mushroom Gravy, Grape Salad with Balsamic Anchovy Vinaigrette and Butter Scotch Ice Cream Pie. Course fee is P1,200.

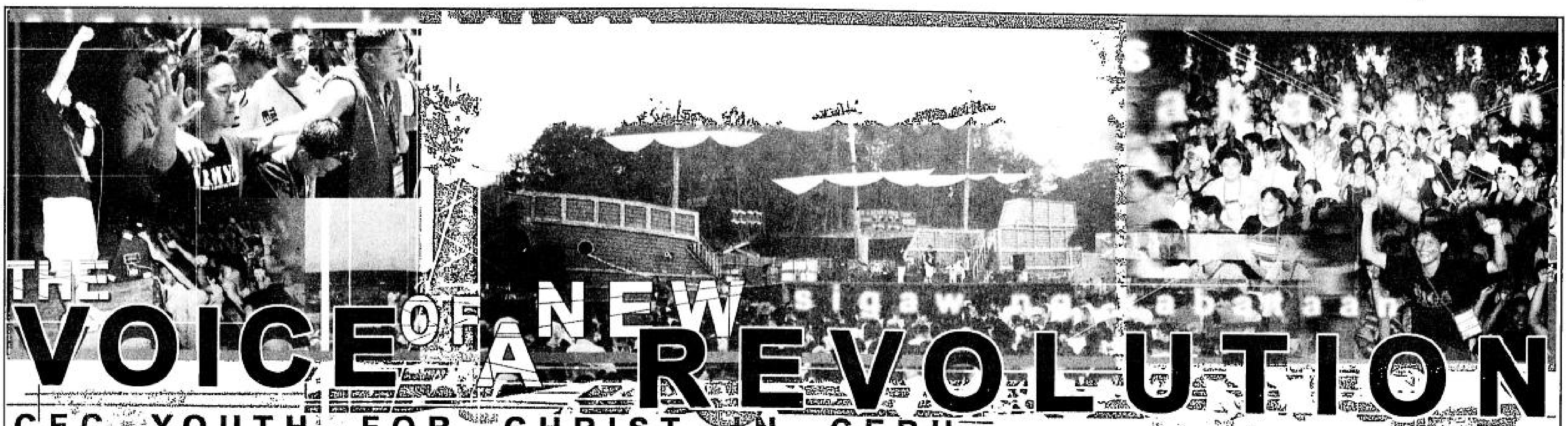
Pasta lovers are invited to the Pasta Workshop on April 24, 1-4 p.m., with Chef Jill Sandique. Recipes includes Spaghetti alla Puttanesca, Fettucine Alfredo, Penne alla Pomodoro. Course fee is P1,200, including ingredients.

Chocolate lovers are invited to attend the Chocolate Desserts Workshop on April 25, 1-5:30 p.m. The menu includes Gateau au Chocolate, Bete Noire or Black Midnight, Chocolate Souffle, Chicken Casserole, Chocolate Creme Brulee, Chocolate Fondue and Chocolate Bread Pudding. Course fee is P1,500, including ingredients.

Bakeshop Specialties is on April 28, 1-4 p.m. Learn how to prepare Chocolate Beehives, Honey Crunch Cake, Black Forest Gateau, Blitz Torte, Brunn Buttercake and Chocolate Marble Chiffon Cake from Chef Jill Sandique.

Chef Gene Gonzalez shares his Favorite Pasta Sauces on April 30, 1-4 p.m. Recipe list includes Seafood in Saffron Creme and Prosciutto, Squid Ink, Vegetarian White Cheese and Herbs, Sicilian Tuna Roe and more. Course fee is P1,200, including ingredients.

Call 725-7089 or 726-9326.

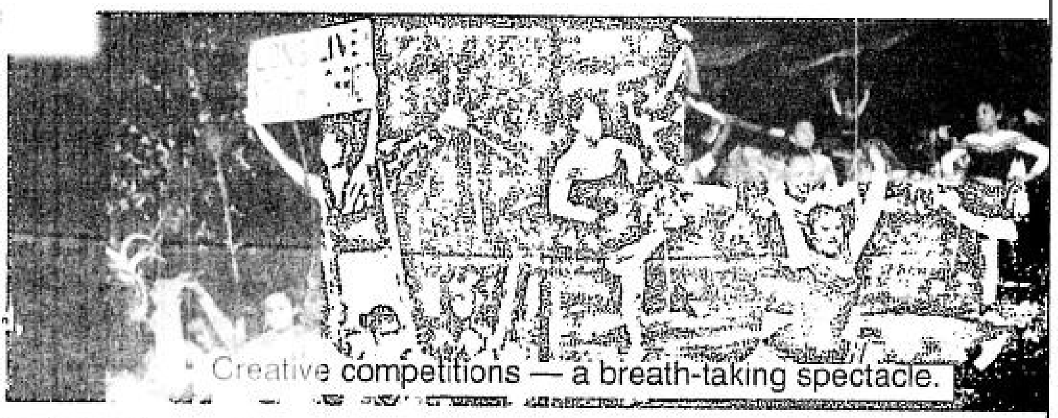


THE VOICE OF A NEW REVOLUTION

CFC YOUTH FOR CHRIST IN CEBU

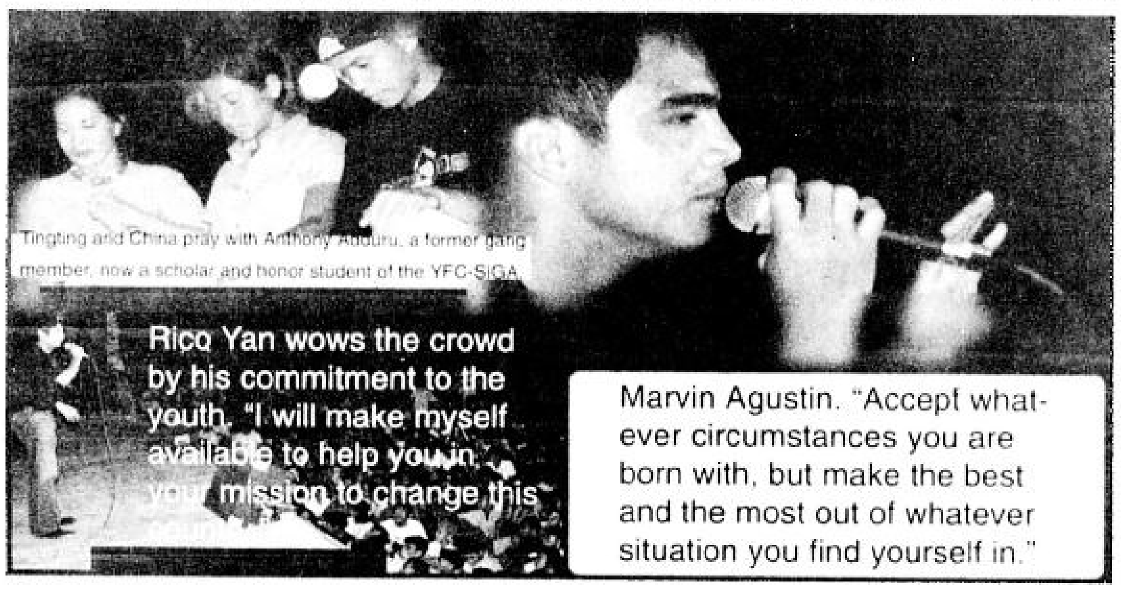
10,000 youth leaders from 78 provinces and 5 foreign countries gathered in Cebu for three days of competition to showcase the world-class talents of the Filipino youth in dance, music, sports, cheering and other creative events. The April 6-8, 2001 youth conference started with a bang with the display of the richness of Filipino culture through the Praise Parade Competition participated in by 13 regions and 5 Metro Manila sectors. It was a spectacle to behold the best of Sinulog, Masskara, Ati-Atihan, Peñafrancia, Pintados and other colorful regional celebrations all in one place.

Maria Montelibano, who judged the dance competition with Triccle Sison remarked, "I was amazed by the display of talents. The whole world has to see this."



Creative competitions — a breath-taking spectacle.

The highlights of the weekend were the awe-inspiring talks and sharings on personal transformation and the desire of the youth to actively participate in rebuilding a new nation that is faithful to its Christian tradition. Popular celebrities like Rico Yan, Marvin Agustin, China Cojuangco and her mom Tingting shared about their deepest desires to bring about positive change to this country through the efforts of the youth who comprised majority of the crowd that marched to EDSA during People Power II.



Tingting and China pray with Anthony Aduuru, a former gang member, now a scholar and honor student of the YFC-SIGA.

Rico Yan wows the crowd by his commitment to the youth. "I will make myself available to help you in your mission to change this country."

Marvin Agustin. "Accept whatever circumstances you are born with, but make the best and the most out of whatever situation you find yourself in."

Aside from the competitions and talks, there were workshops on Youth Leadership through the 1st **LAYA National Congress** led by Father Tito Caluag and presidents of student councils, fraternities and other youth organizations throughout the country. Another workshop was conducted by the **Asian Institute of Democracy** on voters' education and youth vigilance in the electoral process. But the most attended workshop was on **Youth and the Poor** that discussed active participation of the youth in addressing the problem of poverty through its Gawad Kalinga projects in depressed areas.

KATARUNGAN AT PAGBABAGO
KATARUNGAN AT PAGBABAGO KATARUNGAN AT PAGBABAGO KATAR
Katarungan
Pagbabago

The **Gawad Kalinga Awards** were given to the youth volunteers of six areas, namely, Batangas, Bacolod, CAA Compound of South Manila, Cebu, Davao and Iligan for excellence in caring for the poor by repairing their houses, feeding street children, rehabilitating out-of-school youth, building playgrounds, parks and other communal facilities like common toilets, water systems, etc.

Two new movements were launched for the youth to participate in renewing the country and protecting the environment, namely, **Women's War on Waste** (WWOW) and the **13-0 Movement.**

10,000 youth were one in their belief that genuine change in this country will come beginning with personal renewal, the bridging of the gap between parents and children and the restoration of the dignity of the poor. For three days, San Carlos University in Talamban, Cebu, was transformed into a piece of heaven as the poorest kids from areas like Payatas, Smokey Mountain, Bagong Silang, CAA Compound and other depressed areas in Manila and the provinces enjoyed the same food, the same music, the same entertainment, the same sleeping quarters with the richest kids from Forbes Park, Ayala Alabang, and other affluent villages.

Tony Meloto, Director of CFC Family Ministries, with James Pelaez, a rehabilitated gang leader from Magsungay, a garbage village in Bacolod City. James, at 23 years old enrolled himself in grade three after joining the SIGA program of Youth for Christ.

Fr. Tito Caluag, S.J., of the Ateneo Alumni Initiative for National Development prays over Joker Arroyo, Franklin Drilon, Liway Chato and Winnie Monsod (not in picture) during the Eucharistic Celebration at the end of the conference.

In 1521, Lapu Lapu fought the Spaniards to keep our country free. Four hundred eighty years later, a new breed of Filipino youth will become the new Lapu-Lapu who will shed off their colonial mentality, liberate themselves from the corruption of their political system and restore the Filipino nation to greatness.

TRAY filled with spices to flavor the *goto*

KAPAMPANGAN nouveau riche influence is reflected in the ornate picture frame and plastic curtain. The table centerpiece is an orchid on top of a red pepper.

AN ALUMINUM hood hovers over the center table. It was inspired by the ubiquitous water tanks in the provinces. The front table is laden with *bibingka* and typical plate of fried meat, salted eggs, tomatoes, fermented vegetable and fried rice.

C'mon, let's eat!

(From page C1)

house absorbed the aromas. A meal was always a symphony of flavors blossoming in the tongue. Fermented vegetables provided a textural contrast to the fried foods and rice. Every meal included at least four viands. For snacks, the *halo-halo* was just a simple combination of three basic ingredients, unlike the Tagalog's *isang dosenang sarap*, but made memorable by delicately shaved ice and rich milk. *Ginataang munggo* was served with coconut cream on top and boiled tubers were generously topped with raw brown sugar and grated fresh coconut.

WAITER, clad in polo *barong* and an apron, carries the Im-Bento box of soup, a side dish, two viands and rice. He stands against a background of kitsch—fake crystal chandeliers, plastic curtains, ornately carved furniture and picture frame.

Ocampo's remembrances of those dining traditions have inspired him to put up a restaurant with Nievera of the famous Cabalen chain and Ricky Dee, his partner in The Kitchen. Last Easter Monday, the business partners opened Mangan at the Padre Faura Wing of Robinsons Place Ermita.

"Mangan" is Kapampangan for "to eat."

Kitschy décor

The décor is typically Filipino in sensibility—a hodgepodge of Western and pop culture influences with a dash of kitsch. The exposed beams and whitewashed walls are borrowed from the Manhattan loft. Contrasting the industrial look are the florid elements typical of the nouveau riche Kapampangan—baroque furniture, Pinoy icons such as Rizal, Nora Aunor, Elizabeth Ramsay and Cory Aquino painted by fine arts student Robby Mananquil, faux Austrian chandeliers, elaborately carved picture frames, etched mirrors and plastic curtains. Ocampo parodied the Kapampangan's penchant for overdecorating yet covering up the acquisitions with plastic.

Even the table setting is so humorously tacky it's so Pinoy—plastic placemats with lace patterns, fake crystal glasses and intricately carved silverware. The menu is a list of foods on a clipboard brought by waiters in polo *barong* and plastic aprons.

The core of Mangan's dining experience is, naturally, Kapampangan food. Ocampo says it took them months of researching in all the towns of Pampanga to get recipes from the old *kusineras* and to standardize them.

Distinctive taste

The strength of Kapampangan cuisine is natural, and its intricacy is acquired from the blend of many ingredients. A mixture of Spanish and Malay influences, this cuisine is hearty yet delicate. It can also be resplendent. Any Kapampangan will attest that once you've become acquainted with their food, you won't mistake it for anything else.

"Our foods are very distinctive," says Ocampo. The flavors are stronger and richer.

Unlike the plain-looking cuisine of the Tagalog, Kapampagan food is more colorful and attractively appetizing. Ocampo says Mangan won't compromise with the cooking standards. The cuisine is more concerned with fresh ingredients that are well mixed, sometimes prepared for several hours and simmered for a long time that the dish holds the full flavor of all the juices. The fusion of textures is as important in the presentation of food as the blending of various tastes. That's why the Kapampangan *paksiw* is more robust and is lightly piqued with a special chili and bitter gourd.

The foods are spelled the Kapampangan way such as *camias, paksi* (sans the "w"), *queso*. Some of the words maintain the diacritical marks that are typical of the traditional Pilipino such as *singlé* and *gulé*.

One of its biggest come-ons is the Im-Bento, the local version of the Japanese bento box. Instead of a lacquered box, rice, soup of the day, *achara*, fermented foods, a meat or fish dish and vegetables are served on large tray. A full meal costs less than P150. The dishes are cheap, ranging from P35 to P195.

Exotic foods

To this generation raised on fast foods, some of the dishes may sound so arcane. The *kilawin babi* is made of pork *baga* and liver marinated overnight in vinegar, salt, pepper, and then sautéed in onion and garlic. The *baga* and liver are simmered until their juices dry up in the oil. *Umba* is the local version of *pata tim*. The meat is flavored with vinegar, brown sugar, pepper and bay leaf. The banana blossom adds texture to this dish. *Bawang gulé* is a side dish of spring onions and chives with garlic and shrimps. *Lagat apalya* is bitter gourd with pungent onions and garlic mixed with scrambled eggs. *Lagat alagao* is catfish marinated in soy sauce, vinegar and pepper and boiled and sautéed with turmeric and *alagao* leaves.

During the opening day, the popular dishes were the foods familiar to the Manileños. The *pancit luglog* is covered with a rich sauce made with shrimp heads that takes hours to make. It is topped with all kinds of dried fish, fried shrimp flakes, spring onions, boiled egg and punctuated with *kamias* instead of *calamansi*. *Goto* or porridge with chunks of meat is accompanied by canisters of garlic, fried ginger, spring onions and *calamansi*. The *kare-kare* is made only with oxtail instead of cuts of tripe and stewed in a sauce of freshly ground peanuts instead of bottled peanut butter.

The *halo-halo* comes from a famous Guagua formulation. The beauty of this dessert lies in its simplicity. There are only three ingredients—the rich custard flan, sweetened banana and coconut. The fruits are cooked in sugar for several hours until they are sticky and slick. Dee, Ocampo's partner, scoured all over Taiwan to get the right ice shave. When you taste the *halo-halo*, the milk is sweetened and thickened by starchiness of the fruits.

Cosmo Manila

The repertoire of Pandesal Panini is Mangan's version of fusion food. It consists of grilled *pan de sal* from Pampanga (it's got less bromide) that's filled with tuber and ground beef, honeyed chicken, chicken *longganisa* and the traditional cheese pimiento spread made with red peppers, Spanish *queso de bola* and the requisite Anchor butter ("Hanchor" to Kapampangans, as the Kapampangans themselves would note).

Ocampo and his partners are bullish about Mangan. He says they'll be opening more branches in the other malls in the next few months.

Mangan's food is catered to the hip Manileño's tastebuds. The Kapampangans, being picky eaters like the Indians, might prefer Mama's home cooking.

Authentic Japanese treats to tickle one's palate

DINING OUT

KIMPURA introduces its Chef's Specials that include seven new dishes prepared by its Japanese master chef.

The Smoked Salmon with Lemon Slices is garnished with raw onion rings and served with a spicy creamy sauce. An assortment of raw seafood in a bed of greens with white dressing is the Kaisen Sarada. Yasai Katsu is a medley of chopped carrots, green peppers, onions and eggs, rolled in flour and bread crumbs, deep-fried and served with a tangy sauce. Kare Karaage is sole fish fried Japanese style and served with special ponsu sauce. Kisu Batayaki is fillet of whiting (asuhos) rolled with shredded carrots, leeks, celery and golden mushrooms sautéed in butter and soy sauce. The omelet Ankake Ebi Tamagoyaki is stuffed with diced shrimps and vegetables in clear sauce. Kimpura is located at the 2/L of Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati (893-2307/892-4456) and Greenhills Shopping Center, San Juan (721-8816/ 69.)

ROCKWELL CLUB. Savor Thai cuisine until April 26 at the Palm Grove. For appetizers, try SomTam Goong Sod (spicy green papaya and carrot salad with shrimp and peanuts) and Yam Pla Sam Lee (cottonfish salad with mango sauce). Enjoy Tom Yam Goong with its prawns, chili, lemongrass and noodles and rice combinations plus main courses with pork, chicken, mixed seafood and seabass. For desserts, indulge in coconut-based delights like Tub Tim Krob (waterchestnut in sweet coconut milk with jello) and Ice Tim Ka Ti (coconut ice cream with jackfruit and peanut).

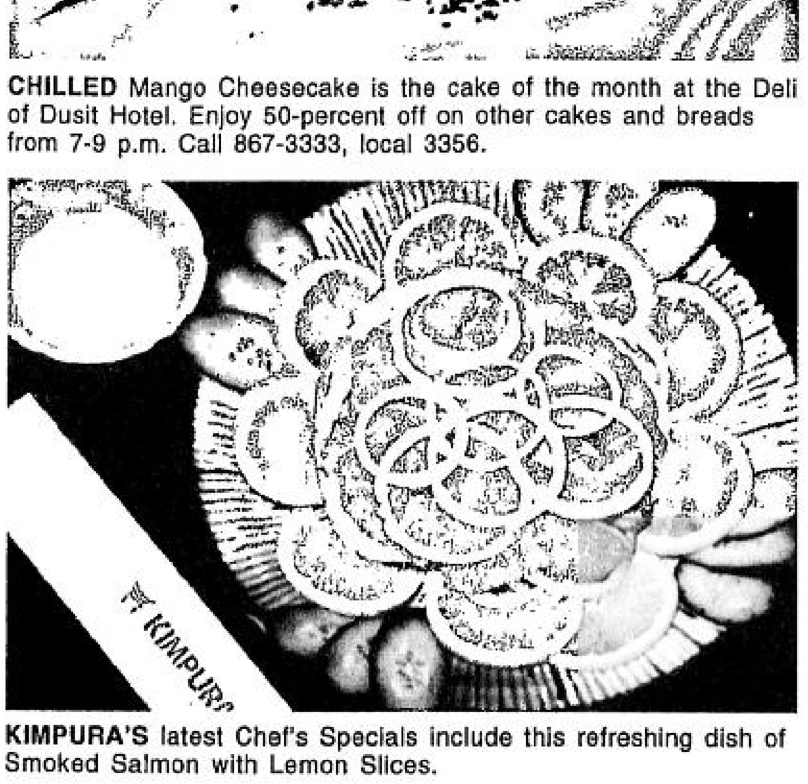
JADE GARDEN. The Restaurant offers a 20-percent discount on its Weekend Lunch Deal this month. All à la carte orders are included in this weekend premium offer. An affiliate of Maxim's Group of Restaurants-Hong Kong, Jade Garden is located at the Greenbelt Mall, Ayala Center, Makati. Call 892-2319/2636.

SULO. The Dimsum Trolley of the Sulo Hotel's Guilin Chinese Restaurant features steamed dishes like Pork and Shrimp with Chinese Ham, "Hakaw" Wrapped in Green Cornstarch, Asparagus Dumpling, Vegetable Dumpling "Chi-chow" Style, Chicken Roll Wrapped in Bean Curd Skin, "Matchang," Squid with Garlic, Stuffed Black Mushroom with Oyster Sauce, Seafood Bundle with Vermicelli, Sharksfin Siomai and many more. Available at the Café Paraiso and the Lobby Lounge until May 16. The Sulo Hotel is located along Matalino Road, Diliman, QC. Call 924-5051 to 71.

CHOWKING'S new Soy Chicken. A quarter-cut of a whole chicken, cooked slowly in soy and fish sauce marinade, with Oriental herbs and spices

CHOWKING. Chowking introduces three meals: Soy Chicken, Tofu and Pork and Congee. Available in almost all outlets nationwide.

CHILLED Mango Cheesecake is the cake of the month at the Deli of Dusit Hotel. Enjoy 50-percent off on other cakes and breads from 7-9 p.m. Call 867-3333, local 3356.



KIMPURA'S latest Chef's Specials include this refreshing dish of Smoked Salmon with Lemon Slices.

INTER-CON. It's strawberry season at the Hotel Inter-Continental Manila until April 28. The promo features cakes, mousses, ice creams, pies and tarts with strawberry as the main ingredient. Dessert creations by the hotel's chefs are Strawberry Romanov, Strawberry Salad scented with Passion Fruit served with Stuffed Crepes in Light Vanilla Cream and Ice Strawberry Soufflé. Call 819-0654.

NEW WORLD RENAISSANCE. New World Renaissance Hotel offers a treat for groups of six or more—15-percent discount in all its restaurants. This is applicable to the total amount of food consumed at the Coffee Shop, Lobby Lounge and Emperor Court for lunch and dinner every Saturday and Sunday and also at Bocarinos for lunch and dinner every Saturday. Call 811-6888.

MANDARIN ORIENTAL. The flavors and aroma of Szechuan cuisine take centerstage at Tin Hau until May 6. Through the specialty dishes of Sun Bing, Chinese sous-chef of Mandarin Oriental, Manila, diners will discover that about one-third of Szechuan cuisine are not spicy at all.

Chef Sun Bing offers dishes which have its roots in Northern China, including Abalone with Shredded Sea Cucumber, Chicken Mushrooms and Bamboo Shoots, Deep-fried Breaded Fresh Scallops with Szechuan Sauce On the Side, Flambe Garoupa in Spicy Soft Bean Curd Sauce, Pan-fried Prawns Szechuan Style, Steamed Codfish with Japanese Bean Curd in Bean Crumb Sauce, Wok-fried Shredded Beef and Dried Bean Curd with Dried Chilli and Stir-fried Squid Noodle in Szechuan Sauce. Apart from the à la carte menu offered for lunch and dinner, about two to three Szechuan dishes are offered each week at the Sunday buffet lunch at Tin Hau. Call 750-8888, local 2422 /2424.

GRAND BOULEVARD HOTEL. Native *merienda* will be offered starting April 23 at the Café Fontana. "Sariling Atin Merienda" will feature Guinataang Halo-Halo, Kutsinta, Bico, Suman, Turrones de Mani, Dinuguan with Puto, Pancit Malabon, Mini Pizza and Chicken Empanada. Call 526-8588, local 7315/7316.

The longest winding buffet

IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez

THE OLD Kamayan we remember for being the first restaurant to allow—in fact to encourage—eating with the hands in a public place. Hand-washing stations were established; diners could eat as they do at home, on a picnic, or when roughing it in the provinces. Rebels like Armida Siguion-Reyna, however, insisted on bringing spoons in their handbags, for "How can I take *sinigang* with my hands?"

That is now an institution, but Tootsie Marco, who runs operations and generates fresh ideas, has this new restaurant on the second floor of the Glorietta in Makati (tel. 892-8908 to -09). Outside, you don't even see the word Kamayan, but you see Dad's and Saisaki, its sister restaurants. Enter, and find a buffet that begins at the door—Kamayan—and continues on to Dad's and to Saisaki, probably one of Manila's longest (being winding as well) buffets.

It must also be one of Makati's best bargains: the Kamayan buffet for P275, Dad's for P350, and all three including Saisaki for P495. On the day we visited, 68 individual items were on the Kamayan tables, with many more potentially there, because there are as well make-your-own-*pancit* (you point, the chef puts it together), *halo-halo* and *bibingka't puto bumbong* stations. It is a feast.

Although we valiantly tried as many dishes as we could—Chef Ed Quimson, Sylvia Cancio, Nancy Reyes Lumen, my nurse Winnie Cantos, Ed's partner Ronald Sampaga and I—we certainly could not sample all.

Favorites

These emerged as my favorites: the *lechon de leche* stuffed with *tanglad*, Ilonggo style; the soup called "*walastik*," made of *mukha ng baka* with ginger; the gelatinous *paksiw na pata ng baka*, the *pancit* with three kinds of noodles that Ed ordered at the station; the crisp *kangkong* leaves (not the usual spinach); the *inihaw na baboy* Bisaya, charsinged at the edges, and dipped in *suka't sili*, (there are also Bicol and Tagalog); the very tender *pusit* (the secret: Lea & Perrins and ginger); *pulutok*, the Pampango *bopis*, wonderfully sour.

Yes, I sampled all that, and wished I could try more. I had started with a green-and-ripe-mango shake, specified by Ed: a mixture of green and yellow. He said that he would have wanted them poured into the glass together, so that the drink would be bi-colored. I ended with *buko-pandan-gulaman*: mellifluous very young *buko* with *gata* and green *gulaman*, an emerald-and-white taste and color symphony.

Tootsie explained that this particular Kamayan serves only buffets, although the others have extensive à la carte menus. The changing lineups allow them to experiment, to bring dishes out of the *lutong bahay* category, to allow the chefs' backgrounds and creativity to input into the menu. *Humba*, for example, which is hardly ever found on a restaurant menu, joins a vegetable dish like *sigarilyas at kabute sa bawang*. Just like home. The *acharas* include *kangkong* and *singkamas* as well as the traditional papaya. Desserts include *ginataang halo-halo* (Ed saved space so that he could have this), *sinukmani* and *unday-unday*, as well as a sophisticated *turon* bathed in caramel and sprinkled with sesame seeds.

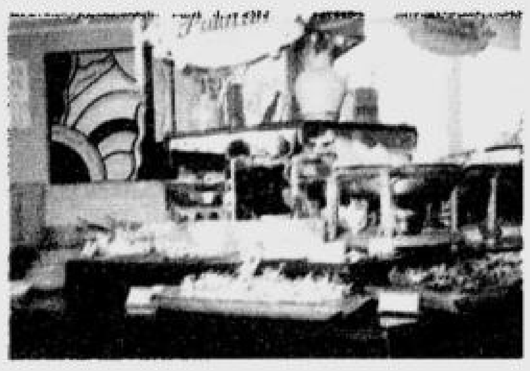
The stellar *lechon de leche* has alongside *lechon manok*, *litsong kawali* and *litsong liempo*. The *ihawan* features *lumot*, *tilapia*, *pusit*, pork and chicken barbecue (what local party these days is without these urban staples?).

There was as well a string trio with a singer, who sang "New York, New York" like Liza Minnelli, including a Satchmo rasp midway, and "Brazil" in Portuguese. Yes, all this at a delicious lunch. Buffets in general I do not love, because they tend to make most people *matakaw sa mata*. They see, they like, they take too much, it all mixes up on the plate, and nothing is at its best.

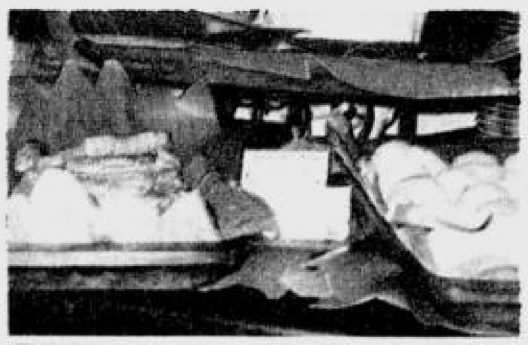
To do justice to a buffet one must focus—only on what one likes, only on what one wants on that day. Kamayan focuses for you on Filipino food at its flexible, varied best. It is up to you to focus further along the viewpoint of tradition, personal taste, the mood of the day, the flavor of the company, the savor of the moment. It can make a great day.

> Kamayan focuses for you on Filipino food at its flexible, varied best. It is up to you to focus further along the viewpoint of tradition, personal taste, the mood of the day, the flavor of the company, the savor of the moment

THE KAMAYAN chef, Ramon Tiamzon, at the buffet



THE PICA-PICA place



TURON and egg balls at the dessert station

TOOTSIE Marco, the boss

THE *LECHON* station

THE MAKINGS of *sawsawan*

MAKE your own *halo-halo*.

LUNCHTIME music

Nelia Silverio Dee's celebrity clients include Sharon Cuneta, Richard and Lucy Gomez and Ben Chan, who got her started in the business

Julius Maggi Kitchen

NOW COOKING

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On April 17, 19 and 21, try your hand at **Creative and Practical Buffet Set-up.**
All sessions include party planning tips and cooking demonstrations for easy-to-prepare, delicious party dishes by food service professionals.

All sessions begin at 2:00 p.m. at the
Julius Maggi Kitchen, Ground Floor, Nestlé Center, 31 Plaza Drive,
Rockwell Center, Makati City.
For more information, call 898-0061.

SPECIAL OF THE MONTH Enrol your kids at the Children's Summer Culinary Workshop on April 24, 26 and 28 with Dorothy Ferreria. For Reservations, call 721-7735 or e-mail ferreria@icon.com.ph

Some Buffet Basics:
- Buffet tables are laden with a variety of dishes, utensils and plates. An efficient way of arranging the table is to place the plates at the start of the table and the utensils and napkins at the other end.
- Raid your attic for buffet table decorations. Knick-knacks, such as old *lamparillas* or other interesting items that have been collecting dust, would make a delightful conversation piece.
- Prepare the dishes that take too long to cook a day before to give you more time to mingle with your guests.

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Friday April 20, 2001 9am – Gourmet Pizzas Php 750.00
Smoked Salmon / Peking Duck / Tuyo, Tomato and Red Egg / Sardines and Onions / Four Seasons / Bacon, Lettuce and Tomato / Fruit.
2pm – Las Paellas Php 1,300.00
Paella a la Sevillana(vegetarian) / Paella con Setas y Mejillones (Mushrooms and Mussels) / Paella Negra(with squid ink) / Paella al Campo(with lamb) / Paella Espanola.
Saturday April 21, 2001 9am – Traditional Pastas Php 750.00
Carbonara / Arabiatta / Marinara / Bolognese / Aglio e Olio
2pm – Very Special Pastas Php 1,100.00
Mushroom Cannelloni / Penne with Smoked Longaniza Sauce / Smoked Chicken Lasagna / Spaghetti with Bacon, Asparagus and Mushroom Cream / Crepes Fettucine with Mango and Grated White Cheese.
Monday April 23, 2001 9am – Children's Series I
Kitchen Safety for Kids
2pm – Fusion I
Chicken Flan Consomme / Crab Timbale with Santol Conserve / Flat Rice Noodles with Triple Tomato and Black Beans / Open Ravioli / Scallops and Prawns with Lemon Grass and Saffron / Caesar's Brother's Salad / Balut Pate / Palate Cleanser: Infusion of Orange, Mango and Basil / Marinated Berries with Gran Marnier and Sake.
Tuesday April 24, 2001 9am – Pub Pulutan Favorites Php 900.00
Salpicao / Gambas al Ajillo / Crispy Shrimps / Champinones al Ajillo / Sizzling Sisig / Sizzling Beef Ribs / Tenderloin Tips
2pm – Fusion II
Pan-fried Fish Fillet in Guava Tomato Butter / Grilled Salmon Marinated Tocino Style / Blackened Lapu-lapu Stuffed with Smoked Salmon on Thai Green Curry Sauce / Pan-roasted Milkfish Bellies with Balayan Salsa / Crispy Shrimps with Wasabe Cream.
Wednesday April 25, 2001 9am – Children's Series II
Cookie Buffet
2pm – Fusion III
Filet Mignon with Coffee Sauce / Grilled Lamb Tenderloin Marinated in Guava Jelly and Coffee / Marinated Chicken Breast Fillet in Kahlua and Pineapple Juice / Beef Calderota Lasagna / Breaded Pork Cutlet with Mango Chutney Cream.
Thursday April 26, 2001 9am – Institutional Ham Curing Php 2,800.00
The Process of Curing, Cooking and Glazing a Leg of Ham, plus two Traditional Sauces: Beer and Pineapple; Maple Syrup and Apple Juice.
2pm – Comfort Food Php 800.00
Roast Duck Mami / Ham and Cheese Macaroni Salad / Double-glazed BBQ Pork Ribs / Pizza Burger / Beehive Chocolate Cupcake with Marshmallows.

Friday April 27, 2001 9am – Children's Series III
Pizza Gallery
2pm – Sushi Festival Php 1,300.00
Tekamaki / Dry Maki / Tuna Roll / California Maki / Tropical Roll / Vegetable Roll / Tamago Roll
Monday April 30, 2001 9am – Children's Series IV
Pasta: All Shapes and Sizes
2pm – Flavors of Spain Php 1,000.00
Ensalada Mixta / Sopa de Ajo / Pescado a la Sal con Aioli / Callos al Estilo "Casa Paco" / Natillas.
Tuesday May 1, 2001 9am – Chocolate, Chocolate, Chocolate Php 1,000.00
Triple Chocolate Silk / Decadent Chocolate Cake / White Chocolate Cheesecake with Strawberries / Toblerone Cream Cake / Charlotte Russe.
2pm – Just Appetizers Php 900.00
Beef Carpaccio Temaki / Shrimp on Toast Cylinders / Assorted Spring Rolls (Taco, Tinapa, Green Mango and Cheddar Cheese) / Tostadas of Tomato and Jamon Serrano.
Wednesday May 2, 2001 9am – Children's Series V
Sandwich Carnival
2pm – The End of the Affair Php 1,000.00
Tiramisu / Mango Napoleon / Chocolate Bavarois with Pistachio Brittle / Carmelized Bread and Butter Pudding / Pandan Crème Brulet.
Thursday May 3, 2001 9am – Basic Cake Making Php 600.00
Sponge Cake / Chiffon cake Roll / Marble Butter Cake / Chocolate Roll / Apple Pie.
2pm – Everyday Food I
Pumpkin Bisque / Pan-fried Fish Fillet Caldereta / Iberian Chicken / Beef Stroganoff / Rachel's Graham Delight.
Friday May 4, 2001 9am – Children's Series VI
Summer Coolers
2pm – Everyday Food II
Meat Ball Stew / Baked White Fish in White Wine and Olive Oil / Chicken Humba / Grilled Pork Chops with Carmelized Onions / Mango Crème Caramel.
Saturday May 5, 2001 9am – Everyday Food III
Sinigang na Lechon Kawali / Bangus Bellies Asado / Chicken a la King / London Broil Steak / Fruit Salad.

Monday May 7, 2001 9am – Children's Series VII
Table Setting and Etiquette
2pm – Northern Italian Specialties Php 1,200.00
Tagliatelle al Granchio / Pollo alla Griglia / Arrosto di Maiale al Latte / Manzo Brazato al Triplo Burro / Zabaglione.
Tuesday May 8, 2001 9am – Native Desserts Php 700.00
Kutsinta / Sapin-sapin / Maja Espesyal / Puto / Puto Pao / Tikoy / Suman sa Latik / Biko.
2pm – Ronald's Family Favorites Php 1,300.00
Mechado / Kare-kare / Lengua Estofado / Pancit Molo / Brownies a la Mode.
Wednesday May 9, 2001 9am – Children's Series VIII
Field Trip to Nestle Philippines
2pm – Crepe Creations Php 600.00
Tomato Garlic and Cheese / Ham and Spinach / Sausage and Cheese / Chicken a la King / Fruit.
Thursday May 10, 2001 9am – Institutional Continental Favorites Php 1,300.00
Zarzuela de Mariscos / Steak Charlemagne / Grilled Lapu-lapu with Monk and Lemon Butter Sauce / Agachonas Adobadas (snipes) / Engana Bobo.
Friday May 11,2001 9am – Children's Series IX
No Bake Desserts
2pm – Wine Appreciation Php 700.00
Saturday May 12, 2001 9am – Children's Series X
Frying and Barbecuing for Kids
2pm – Children's Series Graduation

***Children's Series:** P900.00/class or P7,000.00 for the whole package.
***Fusion Series** (excellent for restaurants): P1,500/class; P3,500.00 for the entire series.
***Everyday Food Series:** P1,000.00/ class; P2,500 for the entire package.

ABOUT THE TEACHERS……

Ed Quimson is a seasoned Master Chef of Chinese-Filipino-Spanish descent, he has worked in California, Florida, Spain, Manila, Cebu, and on a Cruise Ship. He has lent his expertise to such restaurants as La Tasca, Via Mare, The Nielsen Tower, the Member's Lounge of the Philippine Stock Exchange, and Subic Bay Yatch Club. He is as well a feature writer, runs the Rent-A-Chef Catering Service, and is a teacher of 16 years experience.

Ronald Sampaga is a Chef with seven years experience in baking, running a school canteen and his own restaurant. He apprenticed with Ed Quimson as pastry chef, and has since been serving as chef-partner and teacher at the Brada Gallery.

What, pray tell, is taste?

THE MAD TEA PARTY

Clinton Palanca

LATELY, I have had to engage in the sort of rigorous self-examination beloved of Dominican catechism, the Cultural Revolution and the Four-Way Test. I sat in an empty room (actually, it was the bathroom, and it contained two fluffy bath-towels, a bottle of L'Occitane shampoo and a dog), and reflected, in a pseudo-Socratic manner, on the idea of taste.

The (nearly) empty bathroom in question was at my new flat, which I am in the tortured process of moving into at the moment. Few people have seen the work in progress since I believe that, like telling people the plot of a novel you're writing, it would hamper the creative process. But rumors about my excessive use of gold-leafing, my choice of Louis XVI furniture and the purchase of large bolts of Thai silk from Jim Thompson with which to upholster my walls have led many to speculate that the interior will look like something between an Oriental bordello and a Disney rip-off of a Loire chateau. In other words, very much like some houses in Dasmariñas Village inhabited by those women with waterproof hair and their porcelain dalmatians.

What, I asked of my dog, is taste? Is it not simply the exercise of one's personal preferences, in the same way that one prefers the flavor of chocolate ice cream to that of vanilla?

Quite so, replied my dog, from her sitting position on the flagstones of the agora.

The word "taste" is one laden with connotations; its Filipino equivalents, such as *lasa* and *tikim* even more so, which must have led at least one casual browser to the conclusion that Doreen Fernandez is the author of numerous soft-porn movies, rather than erudite studies of Philippine food and eating habits. There is one local music critic who calls himself a "purveyor of taste," a position which he claims and defends by vigorously disliking anything that is remotely popular (apart from that, though, he is an excellent music critic). In our local glossy magazines, the sort of toe-licking articles on clothes, homes and even the contents of the handbags of the country's socialite set regularly describes them as "creatures of taste and sophistication."

What then, asked my dog, is taste?

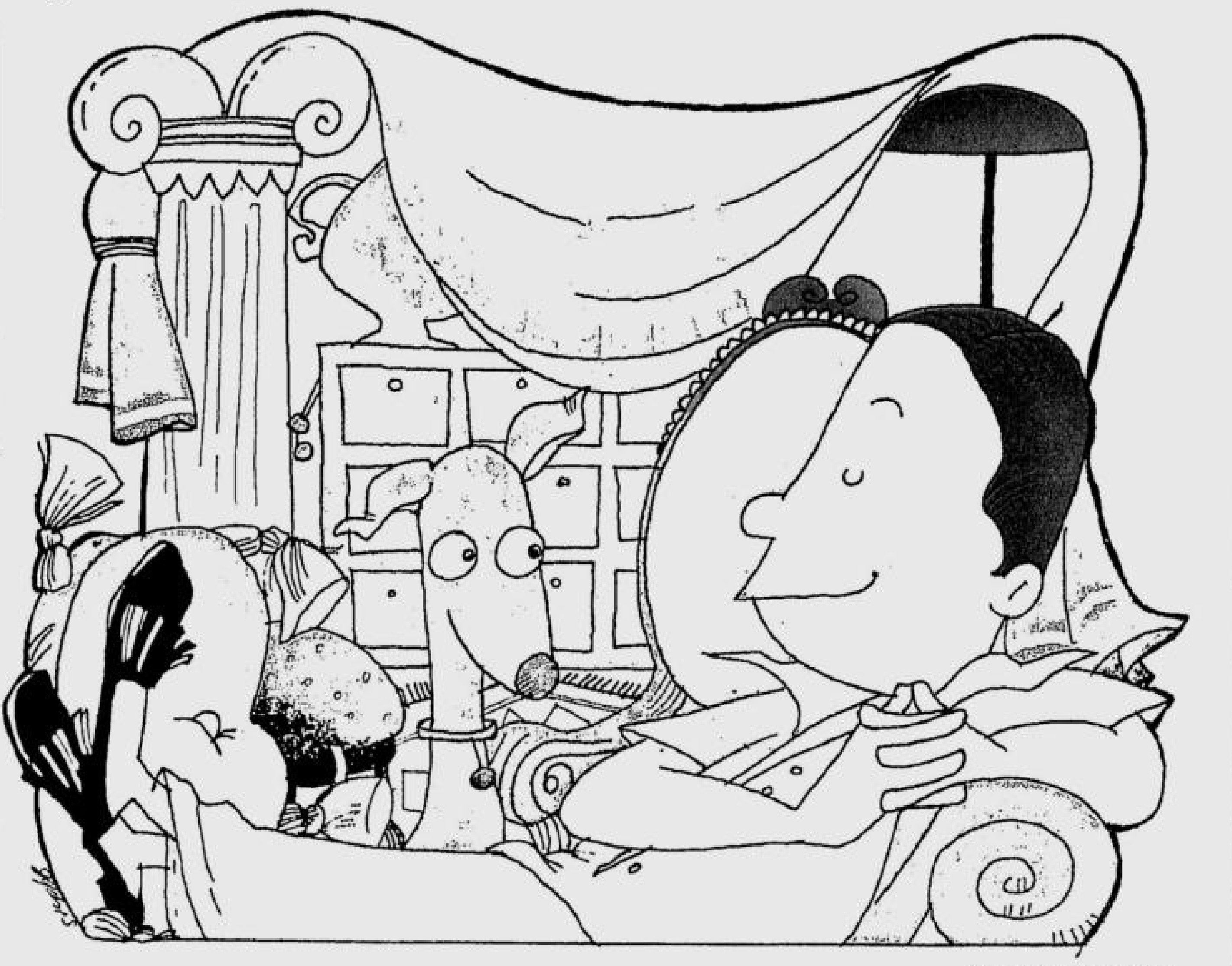

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Let us attack the question from its posterior, as it were, from my occupation as a food critic. One of my jobs, apart from writing pseudo-intellectual essays masquerading as food columns, is to enter a restaurant, eat its food and pronounce it to be good or bad. So pervasive am I, apparently, that various remarks have been attributed to me that I cannot in all lucidity remember having uttered; perhaps there are people with binoculars attempting to discern a furrow in my brow when I take my first bite. But when I'm on the job, that's what I'm supposed to do: Based on the sensations in my mouth and in my nose, say whether a restaurant is good or bad.

Therefore, women who ask me out (all of whom are, unfortunately, hypothetical) tend to assume I am a difficult companion. This is completely untrue, and all stories of me storming into the kitchen wielding a butter knife (this is in reference to the falsely believed alleged incident that most certainly did not happen at the fictitious Hamada at the nonexistent Baguio Country Club) are complete bunkum. In addition to this, my favorite activity after dinner is a nice movie; and here comes the question of taste once again.

I like movies such as "Die Hard," "Space Cowboys" or the recent "Miss Congeniality." Yes, I also like movies such as "1900," "Hiroshima Mon Amour" or early Merchant-Ivory, but I do so more out of a duty to be highbrow than with any genuine enjoyment. Sometimes the two do intersect, as with films that I genuinely love like "The Sheltering Sky," "Red" and "Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon." But in general I do not equate films I like with films I think are good. (It's like the Kantian problem of the transcendental subject: How to make the leap from "I feel hot" to "The room is warm.") In other words, I often like films that are not good; i.e., I have bad "taste" when it comes to movies.

> Everyone knows what they like, unless they are really, really out of it. But whether you're liking the right sort of thing: Ah, now there's the problem

Critics such as Susan Sontag and Pauline Kael have championed camp and pop culture, respectively, making it okay for us to deem as good films those that are actually (a) in English, (b) comprehensible, (c) entertaining, (d) in which no one dies of consumption. Similarly, in the area of food, there are new, more relaxed critics like Nigella Lawson, or the highly liberating cookbook author Nigel Slater who recently wrote a book called "Appetite," in which he sang praises of hamburgers, Chinese takeout and kebab stands (he's a Brit).

Oh, but come on! Don't you think there's something wrong when the critic seems to be just an ordinary Joe with ordinary tastes like yours and mine? Would the pronouncements of Richard Howard have quite as much gravitas if his night-table contained (as mine does) Elizabeth Wurtzel's "Prozac Nation," the 2001 copy of the Gault-Millau food guide to France and this month's Vogue, GQ, Preview, People Asia, Mega and Metro (they were all of out Hello! magazine; no, just kidding). Maybe it does; maybe Richard Howard (who I hear wears purple and who has a dog named Gide) has Inches and Glamour beside his Nabokov and Malraux. But we want to believe that he is the impeccable French scholar and translator, just as we want to believe that the editors of Pulp don't listen to Abba and Wham! when they're off-duty, just as it is the reason I wear a putty nose and false moustache when I sneak into Kentucky Fried Chicken for a Zinger.

Those who are not confident about their tastes tend to hide behind the refuge of "I know what I like," which is almost as much a tautology as "This food is delicious because it is good to eat." Everyone knows what they like, unless they are really, really out of it ("Do I like this?"). But whether you're liking the right sort of thing: Ah, now there's the problem. Do I not speak the truth?

I think you do, replied my dog.

Back to my apartment, then, and to my profound insecurities about its interior decoration scheme, and my apprehension at the thought of inviting my friends over, among whom number some professional interior designers and a lot of very snooty people. But I will stand firmly by my taste, which has produced a strange hybrid of Biedermeier/Louis XIV-XVI (inclusive)/ Asian colonial/Pinoy "*bahay ni lola*" styles. It's pleasing to my eye, and that's what counts, yes?

So I shall invite my friends over and play a medley of songs that will range from Queen to Alex E. to jungle (oh! so passé!), and I shall wear white pants, shoes without socks, a short-sleeved short with too many buttons open and have Tancho gel in my hair. And the food? Well, there's nothing so declasse as Shrimp Cocktail, Caesar Salad, Steak with Mushroom Gravy and Chocolate Mousse to follow, all washed down with ice-cold wine coolers and brewed coffee into which you put nondairy creamer from sachets which you stashed a handful of from McDonald's.

You do believe I'm kidding, don't you? Really, I am. Really.

E-mail the author at clinton@i-manila.com.ph

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FGU

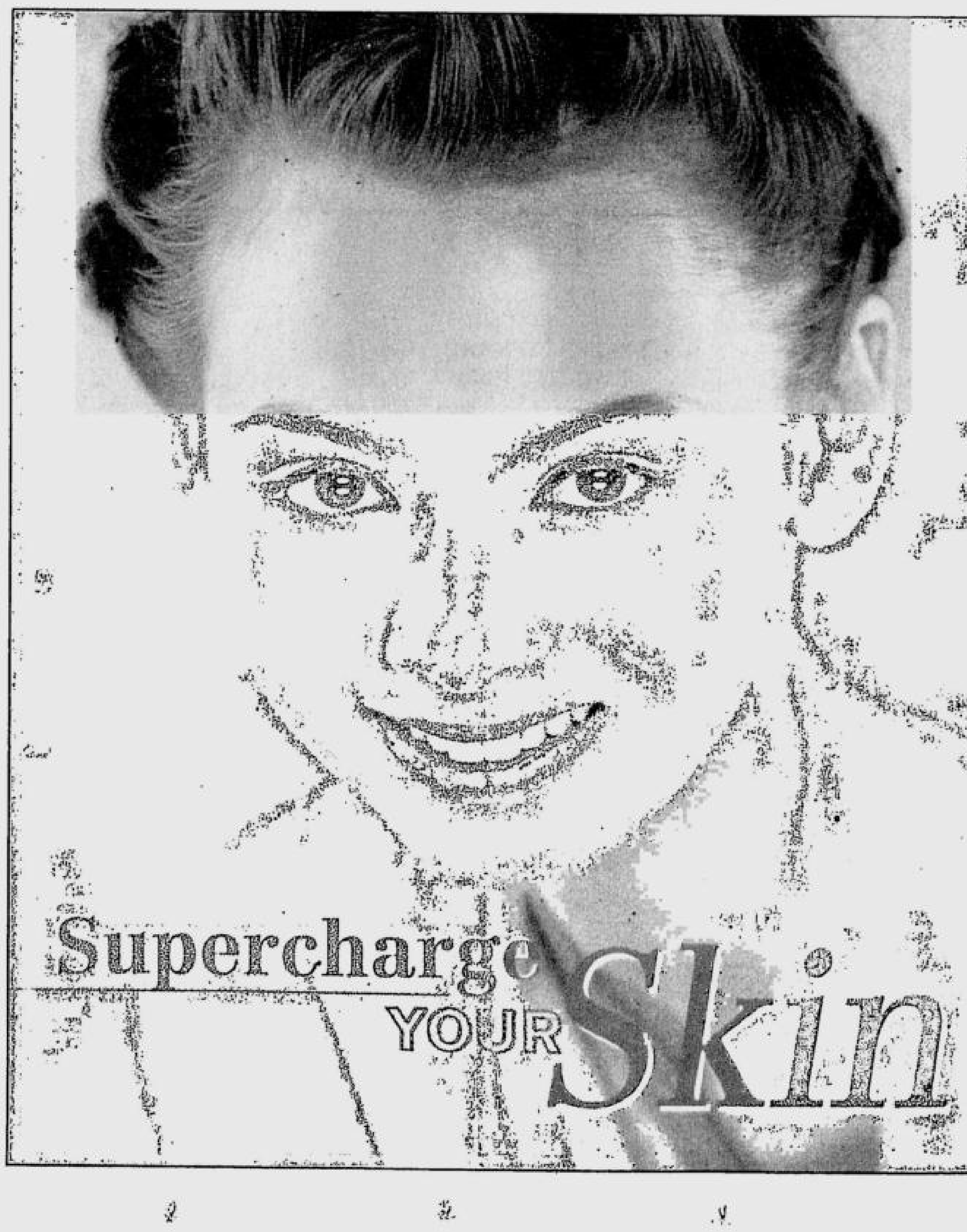
FGU Insurance marks successful debut in *Gabay Manlalakbay*

FGU Insurance Corporation, the non-life insurance arm of the Ayala Group of Companies and the Bank of the Philippine Islands, recently made a triumphant participation in the *Gabay Manlalakbay 2001*. Now on its 12th year, the undertaking was held in partnership with Pilipinas Shell, Regional Emergency Assistance Communication Team (REACT) Philippines, the Philippine National Red Cross and 105.1 Crossover.

From April 11 to 15, FGU set up booths in Shell stations in the South Luzon Expressway in Susana Heights, Muntinlupa and North Luzon Tollway in Balagtas, Bulacan, and offered new Personal Accident insurance to give travelers added protection. The heaviest traffic flow from Metro Manila to outlying provinces was again observed during the Holy Week. Gridlocks, accidents and engine breakdowns occurred from the sheer number of vehicles on the road, that's why having a motor and personal accident insurance became all the more important.

According to FGU President Alfonso "Yogi" Salcedo Jr., "Our participation in this undertaking was truly fruitful as it served to underscore FGU's mission of constantly providing quality insurance services to Filipinos, wherever they may be."

Gabay Manlalakbay also involved the coordinated provision of traffic assistance, roadside vehicle assistance, towing service and first aid to motorists and covers locations like Olongapo City, Agoo, La Union and Baguio in the north and Balayan, Batangas City in Batangas, Pagsanjan and San Pablo in Laguna in the south.



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ALL CENTERS ARE NOW OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK.
MON. - FRI. (8 AM - 7 PM) / SAT. (8 AM - 5 PM) / SUN. (10 AM - 3 PM)